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TONY WILLIAMS

- MARK ZONDER
OF FATES WARNING
- MALE VOCALISTS SPEAK
OUT ON DRUMMERS

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FEATURES

TONY WILLIAMS

Not content to merely be an indisputable master on the drums, Tony Williams is constantly pushing himself to excel as an effective composer as well. In this special interview, Tony discusses his newest album and reflects on his incredibly innovative career.

• by *Bill Milkowski*

20

FATES WARNING'S MARK ZONDER

Mark Zonder puts all his years of playing experience into every Fates Warning gig and record. Here Zonder recounts all that's involved in Fates' rhythmic and melodic intricacies, and talks about the making of their latest album.

• by *Matt Peiken*

26

MALE VOCALISTS ON DRUMMERS

What do Al Jarreau, Alice Cooper, Clint Black, Ozzy Osbourne, Michael McDonald, Tony Bennett, Michael Bolton, and Jeffrey Osborne have to say about our art? Learn what it takes to play drums for the world's top singers—right from the horse's mouth.

• by *Robyn Flans*

30

1992 READERS POLL RESULTS

34

MD TRIVIA CONTEST

Win Rod Morgenstein's blue & gold Premier touring drumset—worth \$14,000!

76



Education

- 52 ROCK PERSPECTIVES**
Style & Analysis:
Joseph "Zigaboo"
Modeliste
BY RICK MATTINGLY
- 62 STRICTLY TECHNIQUE**
Continuous Roll Study
In 12/8 Time
BY JOE MORELLO
- 106 CLUB SCENE**
What's Your
Alternative?
BY RICK VAN HORN
- 110 LATIN SYMPOSIUM**
Applying The Mambo
Rhythm
BY CHUCK SILVERMAN
- 118 ROCK CHARTS**
Blas Elias:
"Up All Night"
TRANSCRIBED BY
HOWARD FIELDS

Equipment

- 40 PRODUCT CLOSE-UP**
Montgomery
Snare Drum
BY RICK MATTINGLY
- 41 A.D.M. Snare Drums**
BY ADAM J. BUDOFSKY
AND WILLIAM F. MILLER
- 46 ELECTRONIC REVIEW**
Spacemuffins
BY RICHARD WATSON
- 122 NEW AND NOTABLE**

Departments

- 4 EDITOR'S OVERVIEW**
- 6 READERS' PLATFORM**
- 12 ASK A PRO**
- 16 IT'S QUESTIONABLE**
- 100 CRITIQUE**
- 104 LIAISON**
- 130 DRUM MARKET**

News

- 8 UPDATE**
Matt Frenette, the
Psychedelic Furs' Don
Yallech, Lynn Perko of
Sister Double
Happiness, and Hall &
Gates' Mike Braun,
plus News
- 126 INDUSTRY HAPPENINGS**

Profiles

- 56 UP & COMING**
Stern & Berg's
Ben Perowsky
BY GEORGIA ANTONOPOULOS
- 80 ENCORE**
Herman Ernest:
Fiyo On The Bayou
BY ROBERT SANTELLI
- 112 A DIFFERENT VIEW**
Stanley Clarke
BY DAVID ALDRIDGE AND
ADAM WARD SELIGMAN



New From The Book Division



It's no secret that *MD* editors have always felt that serious drummers should have an understanding of and an appreciation for the great drummers of the past. In keeping with that thought, I'm happy to announce the most recent addition to the *MD* Book Division, *The Great Jazz Drummers*, advertised elsewhere in this issue. Authored by yours truly, and edited by *MD*'s William F. Miller, *The Great Jazz Drummers* is a 128-page text that acts as a reference source on the heritage of jazz drumming, and pays tribute to those artists who were instrumental in its development.

Jam-packed with exclusive photos, *The Great Jazz Drummers* looks at the work of over 60 artists, beginning with Zutty Singleton in the '20s. The book then takes us through the big band era of the '30s, the bop movement of the '40s and '50s, the contemporary players of the '60s and '70s, and on up to the present. Each profile offers not only biographical information, but a description of the artist's style, his contribution to the art, and the extent of his influence on other drummers, as well.

In an effort to make *The Great Jazz Drummers* even more enlightening for readers, the book comes with an 18-minute *Sound Supplement* containing excerpts of the playing of 16 important drummers who encompass a period of roughly seven decades. For those who may never have actually had the opportunity to hear the pioneers of modern drumming, the *Sound Supplement* will be invaluable in helping listeners recognize the bloodline that runs from Baby Dodds to Tony Williams—from Zutty to Elvin.

In the preparation stages for nearly a year, *The Great Jazz Drummers* was a labor of love for me personally. Our goal was to give serious drummers a greater appreciation for the rich tradition of jazz drumming. Hopefully we've succeeded in doing just that. My thanks to *MD* staffers Bill Miller for his fine editing and input, Adam Budofsky for hours of proofreading, and Art Director Scott Bienstock for an elegant layout. Rarely does a project of this magnitude come together through the efforts of one individual. *The Great Jazz Drummers* was a team effort following its initial research and writing, and we're hoping it will be received with the same enthusiasm we all had in putting it together.

RF

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EDITOR/PUBLISHER	Ronald Spagnardi
ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER	Isabel Spagnardi
MANAGING EDITOR	Rick Van Horn
FEATURES EDITOR	William F. Miller
ASSOCIATE EDITOR	Adam J. Budofsky
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT	Justin J. Cordes
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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Robyn Flans, Simon Goodwin, Rick Mattingly, Ken Micallef, Jeff Potter, Teri Saccone, Robert Santelli.

MODERN DRUMMER magazine (ISSN 0194-4533) is published monthly by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.**, 870 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Second-Class Postage paid at Cedar Grove, NJ 07009 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 1992 by **MODERN DRUMMER Publications, Inc.** All rights reserved. Reproduction without the permission of the publisher is prohibited.

EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES: **MODERN DRUMMER Publications**, 870 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Tel.: (201) 239-4140.

MODERN DRUMMER welcomes manuscripts and photographic material, however, cannot assume responsibility for them. Such items must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

MUSIC DEALERS: *Modern Drummer* is available for resale at bulk rates. Direct correspondence to *Modern Drummer*, Dealer Service, P.O. Box 389, Mt. Morris, IL 61054. Tel.: (800) 334-DRUM or (815) 734-6013.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$27.95 per year; \$49.95, two years. Single copies \$3.95.

SUBSCRIPTION CORRESPONDENCE: *Modern Drummer*, P.O. Box 480, Mt. Morris, IL 61054-0480. **Change of address:** Allow at least six weeks for a change. Please provide both old and new address. Toll Free Tel.: (800) 551-3786.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Modern Drummer*, P.O. Box 480, Mt. Morris, IL 61054.

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Mike Bordin

Before I read your April '92 cover story on Mike Bordin of Faith No More, I was impressed by his drumming style and originality. However, I had never read an interview with him. The article didn't just give me an impressive account of his technique; it also opened my mind. Mike mentioned many artists that I had never heard, such as Chick Webb and Art Blakey. Two months ago, I would never have thought that I would be listening to recordings dated earlier than 1967, but Bordin opened my eyes to them. Thanks to Mike and *Modern Drummer* for helping me to respect the music of these great artists instead of shunning them—as I had always done before.

Robert Lepor
Cape May NJ

Getting Replaced In The Studio

"Getting Replaced In The Studio" by Rick Mattingly [April '92 *MD*] should be required reading for drummers of all ages and levels of experience. The true stories told by greats such as Keltner, Porcaro, Newmark, Blaine, and Aronoff are more than enough to create new inspiration and encouragement for all of us. I think it would be beneficial to drummers everywhere to see such an article perhaps twice a year—describing similar career experiences of other name drummers.

Herb Brochstein
President - Pro-Mark Corp.
Houston TX

Tales From The Soviet Union

I commend you on the astute and enlightening article by Matt North, "Tales From The Soviet Union," in your April issue. It is one thing to build up callouses, sight read "The Black Page," play for a wedding or in front of 10,000

people...it is an altogether different thing to simply be thankful for having the physical ability and mental focus to play the drums and the freedom to take advantage of that passion. After reading about the dedication of the Soviet drummers Matt mentioned in his article—and the obstacles they are faced with—it seems that we drummers in the U.S. should all be a little more thankful for what we have, instead of complaining about what we don't have.

Don Zulaica
Menlo Park CA

Drum Transcriptions

In response to several inquiries you've had about drum transcriptions, there are many publishing companies who sell drum music in some form—usually as "combo" or "artist" transcriptions. These books generally offer full parts for each instrument.

Cherry Lane offers "Note For Note Drum Transcriptions" by various rock bands like Metallica and Rush. Hal Leonard Publishing offers combo scores known as "Artist Transcriptions" for various rock and jazz albums. Amsco Music Sales offers the "Off The Record" series along with some of their personality folios in this format (such as the new Led Zeppelin boxed set). To purchase any of these books you can contact your local music store, or order directly from us at (212) 677-0821.

Vic Pullen
Carl Fischer Music
New York NY

Make It Funky!

"The Drummers Of James Brown" [April '92 *MD*] was a tribute to more than just three talented drummers. It was an in-depth look at the foundations of a drumming style that has since affected virtually every other type of music in the pop

idiom. There would be no fusion without funk, no rap without funk, no electric jazz, no thrash/funk...and on and on. And without the influence of Mssrs. Stark, Stubblefield, and Parker, there might not have been a David Garibaldi, or a Sonny Emory, or even a Dennis Chambers—at least not the way we admire them today. A lot of musical history is somewhat vague, and the origins of specific styles are often hard to pinpoint. Not the case here, though. James Brown defined the funk style, and his drummers refined it. Later generations absorbed it and re-issued it in a variety of wonderful new music—but they never really improved on the original. Thank you for giving these funk pioneers their due!

Bill Johnson
Los Angeles CA

H.E.A.R., Hear!

As the Executive Director of H.E.A.R. (Hearing Education and Awareness for Rockers), I'd like to thank you on behalf of the entire organization for the recent H.E.A.R. ad in *Modern Drummer*. Yours was the first music magazine to help us spread the word about hearing loss to the music community and the general public. We received tremendous response from the October '90 article on hearing loss by Peter Cohen. We will never forget the great service that *Modern Drummer* has done for us. Your contribution has been of great value with the expectation that it will raise the awareness of rock performers, professionals, and patrons of the need to protect one of their greatest resources: their hearing.

Kathy Peck
Executive Director, H.E.A.R.
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Matt Frenette

"A lot of people assumed that the demise of Loverboy in 1989 was my demise, as well," says Canadian drum veteran Matt Frenette. "Although I have no regrets—we had ten great years and sold about 15 million albums—when you're in a band like Loverboy, you tend to get locked into what works for the group. At the end it was getting pretty stifling. I was looking for changes in my life as a player—and as a person."

The first change for Matt came by way of a call in early 1990 from progressive-rock artist Kim Mitchell. "He told me that he wanted to do an album and then tour Canada," says Matt, "but he'd just fired his drummer. I said, 'I'm in! When do I leave?'"

"Kirn's music is pretty involved," Matt continues, "so I really got to use my brain. I'm on two tracks of his *I'm A Wild Party* album, including the title track. A funny thing happened when we were recording that tune—which we did live-to-tape. I was just sort of running the part down. It had some quirky timing changes, and I was really thinking hard and just wailing away. When I told Kim, 'Okay, I think I've got it; we can go for a take,' he said, 'No, I love it. It's a keeper. Let's go to the pub



and throw some darts!"

In October of '90, Matt's career took another turn: a tour with country-pop artist Sue Medley. "Sue's material was a lot lighter than Kirn's," says Matt. "I had to go to a lighter stick and a smaller kit, and I really worked on my dynamics. At the same time, I was taking lessons, doing clinics, and making calls to let people know that I was still alive."

Those calls led to demos for an act called Hall Of Flame. But Matt was unable to do their album because of his current gig with pop-

rock Tom Cochrane. "I signed on with Tom for his *Mad Mad World* tour in October of '91," says Matt. "It's a really hot band, and this time I'm touring the States. We started in March in Pennsylvania, and we'll be out at least through the summer in order to break the record in the U.S."

• Rick Van Horn

Don Yallech

Don Yallech was in Boston playing drums in *Fiddler On The Roof* when the Psychedelic Furs requested him for an audition. "They didn't audition anyone else," he says prior to a sold-out Furs show at the University of California in Riverside. "Everything worked out personally and musically."

The first day in the studio, the band began playing songs for their *World Outside* LP, marking a return to the roots of the Furs' sound. "This album is the band growing up," says Don, who was a

long-time fan of the group before he became the drummer. The Furs are equally proud of Don. "He's a precise timekeeper," says bassist Tim Butler. "He can play anything you want." "The guy is hot," says guitarist and cellist Knox Chandler.

Don, 33, grew up in Youngstown, Ohio, where he received his undergraduate degree at the Dana School of Music, playing drums, percussion, and marimba. He then earned a masters degree at the Manhattan School of Music in New York.

It was while playing drums for a new wave/punk band called the B-minors that he began listening to the Psychedelic Furs. "I always admired that low-end snare drum sound," Don says. "So I figured I would go for that sound. I tried a couple of different drums, and now I'm using a Brady snare, which has a nice, warm, wooden sound, but still has a good cut to it. I'll try to add my own thing to the band, though."

• Chris Boyle

Lynn Perko

You can't tell by just listening to Sister Double Happiness that the only woman in the band sits on the drum throne. Actually, Lynn Perko says that because of her background in various punk outfits, she had to tone *down* somewhat, if only on a subconscious level, to fit in with the San Francisco group's blues-rooted rock. It was a change of style she was more than happy to make.

"The transition from punk to blues didn't happen overnight," says the tall 28-year-old. "But I was getting tired of having to always play faster and harder all the time. It was suffocating. Now I play with brushes sometimes, and we do an acoustic set where I just play bass, snare, and hi-hat."

On the band's Warner/Reprise debut, *Heart And Mind*, Perko lays down simple but driving beats. On stage, though, she's a powerhouse. "I actually started playing on garbage cans when I was 16," she says. "I was a classically trained pianist, but I always loved the rhythm section, and I tuned into that without ever being a drummer. I was kind of a rebel, and growing up with a classical pianist for a mother, I wanted to get away from that."

Perko's first experience playing with a band came in her hometown of Reno, Nevada, with the Wrecks, who toured with such punk luminaries as DOA and Black Flag. Perko went on to the Dicks, another punk group, and then she and two other members branched out to form Sister

Double Happiness six years ago.

Lynn has since taken lessons on occasion to help foster her growth as a musician. She was nominated for a Bay Area Music award for drumming, and among those impressed with her style is Paul Westerberg of the Replacements, who asked her to play on a single.

"I've never been one to just sit down and practice for hours. I don't have that kind of discipline," she says. "But to go into situations of playing with other musicians, especially being a woman, it's important for me to be confident that I can pull something off—and for the people I'm playing with to have confidence in me."

• **Matt Peiken**

Mike Braun

Mike Braun is gearing up to resume with Hall & Oates after a much-needed hiatus. He is looking forward to the next record project, though, having enjoyed working on *Change Of Season*, which came out last fall.

"They have their own studio," Mike recounts. "We started cutting tracks, and it was feeling really good. We got away from the whole drum machine thing a lot. The recent tour was an acoustic tour, in fact. The guys were playing acoustic guitars, and there was no drum machine, but we were kicking pretty good. It was great to return to the acoustic approach. It frees you up in that you depend on your own innate time, and you don't have to be held down to anything. Sometimes working with a machine is fine if it really has to be there, but I find nothing wrong with the ener-

gy going up a little bit at the end of a song or in a chorus, especially live.

"There are still a few tracks on that record that [programmer] Jimmy Bralower was involved with—Daryl still has to have that drum machine sometimes," Mike laughs. "And then we cut about four or five things that didn't get on the record but that were really cool. I took my rack tom off the kit and was sitting cross-legged with a brush and a stick. We had a great groove going, and it was really cool stuff."

In his spare time, Mike and the rest of the Hall & Oates backup band play in New York under the banner of Chefs Of The Future.

• **Robyn Flans**

News...

Bryan Hitt recently got the gig with Cher. He's also continuing to work with REO Speedwagon.

Tommy Aldridge has joined House Of Lords. Check him out on their recent release.

Carl Palmer back with ELP.

Mark Schulman has been working with Bobby Caldwell. He is also a member of Jennifer Batten's new band, Medusa, and can be heard on her new record as well as on some gigs with Jeff Lorber.

In his spare time away from *Saturday Night Live*, **Matt Chamberlain** played drums

along with Dana Carvey for the theme song on the *Wayne's World* soundtrack. He can also be heard on a recent Epic release by the Front, can be seen in the live Pearl Jam video, "Alive," and is doing local New York gigs with his own band, Three Pound Universe.

Josh Freese recently left Dweezil Zappa's band and joined Infectious Grooves, and is also working with his band X-large, which has a record due out this summer.

Mike Radovsky can be heard on albums by Bedlam (*Into the Coal*) and Dallas Holms. He is also doing live

gigs with Bedlam and Rick Elias.

Jeff Porcaro is gearing up for a tour with Toto in support of their new release. He can also be heard on projects by the B-52's, Ray Charles, Felix Cavaliere, 10cc, and Rodney Crowell. Also, congratulations to Jeff and his wife Susan on the birth of their son Nico Hendrix.

Eddie Bayers has been in the studio with Lee Greenwood, Susie Bogguss, Tim Mensy, Dean Dillon, Kathy Mattea, Tanya Tucker, Kathy Lee Gifford, Ricky Van Shelton, Lionel Cartwright, Trisha Yearwood, and Hank

Williams, Jr., and on a duet album by Vince Gill and Patty Loveless.

Herb Shucher has been doing live dates with Tracey Lawrence.

Pat Torpey has been on the road with Mr. Big.

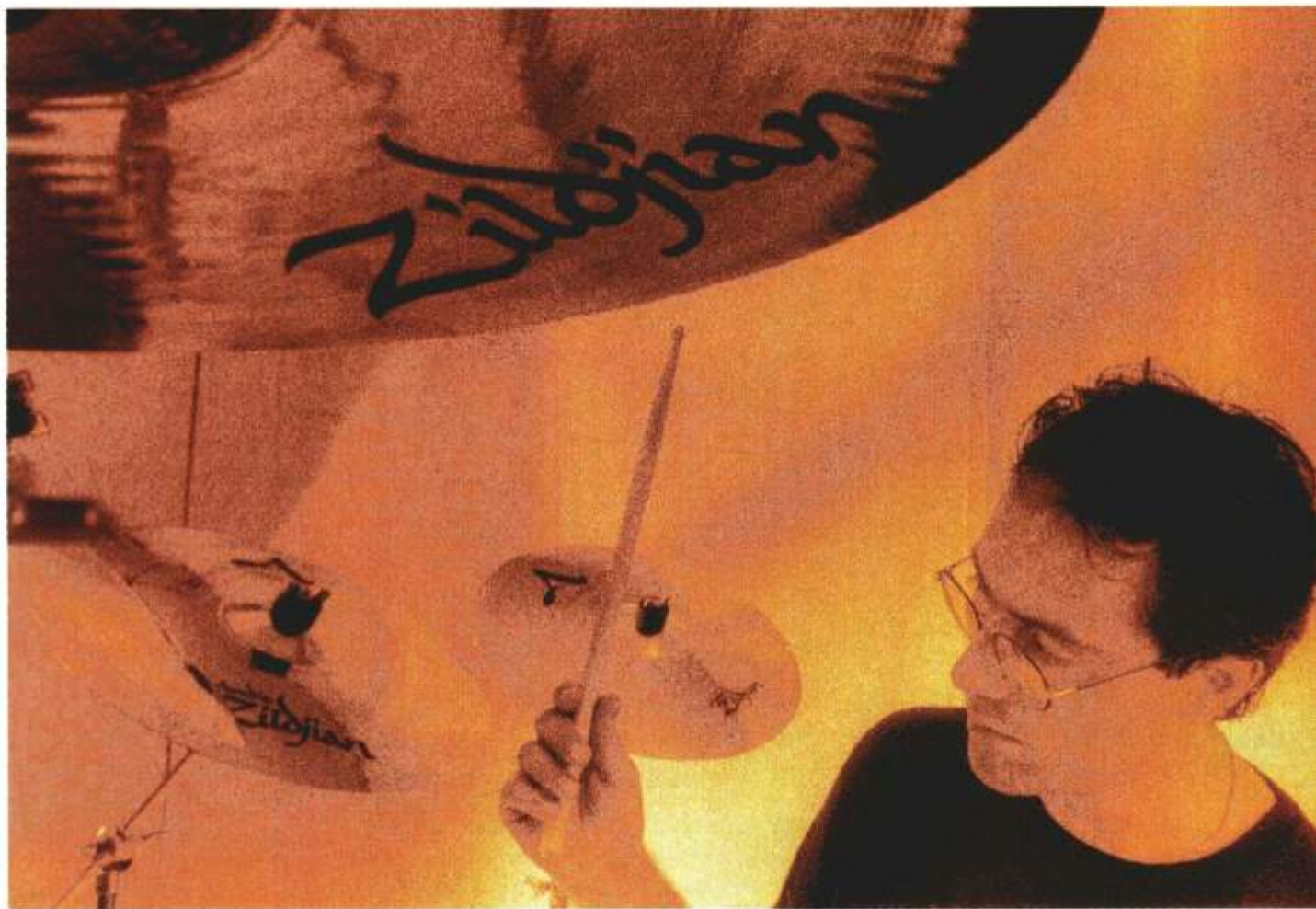
Jay Schellen is on Unruly Child's debut album.

Paul Monroe on the road with XYZ.

Niclas Sigevall on tour with the Electric Boys in support of their new album, *Groovus Maximus*.

Kevin Valentine has replaced Fred Coury in Cinderella.





"ZILDJIAN TOOK THESE SO

Vinnie Colaiuta had a clear picture in his mind of

what his dream cymbal would be. "It would have a 'sweet' sound," explained Vinnie. "Not too dark. Not too light. Sort of in-between, but not bland and not middle-of-the-road.

It would be a thin cymbal with more spread than a thicker cymbal, but not too much more.

When I hit the bell, it wouldn't go 'ching-ching' like

a cash register. It would open up as soon as I touched it. I could even hit it with my finger and it would still sound good. It would speak to me. In a nutshell, the cymbal would be strongly reminiscent of the old Zildjian

A, but with a more contemporary feel." Interestingly,



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us field test. And after a lengthy process of playing,

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UNDS OUT OF MY HEAD."

*several months prior to this discussion with Vinnie,
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Steve Smith, Neil Peart, William Calhoun and
Omar Hakim, amongst others, to help*

20" and 22" rides. To learn more about them, please

*write Zildjian at 22 Longwater Drive, Norwell,
MA 02061. As a parting note, we'd like to thank all
the artists involved in creating the A Custom.
Especially Vinnie. Because when we sat down
to work, his head was into it the most.*

Zildjian

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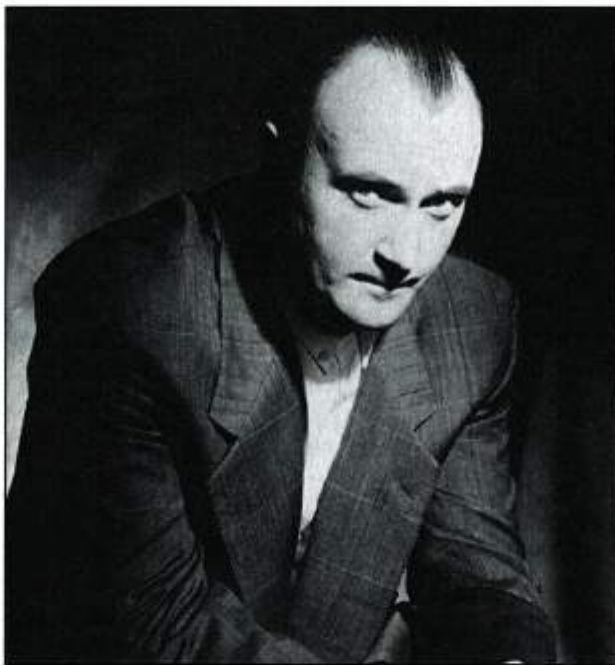


Phil Collins

Q Let me start off by saying what an incredible player you are, and what a source of inspiration you have been to me. I just purchased *We Can't Dance*, and I have two questions. First, did you share drumming duties with Chester Thompson on this album, and, if so, who played what? (There are no credits on the CD.) Second, during the break in "Jesus He Knows Me" you (or Chester) hit a splash, and then hit another small cymbal that sounds much like a bell. Could you tell me what that cymbal is, and who makes it?

Nick Amoroso
Burbank CA

A Thanks for the letter, Nick. Flattery will get you everywhere!



Chester didn't play on *We Can't Dance*. In fact, apart from the live records, I am the only drummer with Genesis. The way we write (i.e., "make up as we go along") means that we have the whole thing self-contained within the three of us. On "Jesus," I used a selection of very small, thin Sabian cymbals ranging from 6" to 12", along with a 22" Dry Ride. The small cymbals are of varying thickness, and sometimes the smaller, heavier cymbals sound like bells. Cheers!

Ed Shaughnessy

Q For the past 20 years I have been constantly impressed with your nightly performance on the *Tonight Show*. Your versatility, musicality, technique, and sheer gracefulness of movement is awe-inspiring. You are truly a master!

Now that your tenure on the show has drawn to a close, what are your plans? Also, will any of your outstanding performances with the *Tonight Show* band or any of your instructional clinics/seminars be available on home video? Thanks for giving us so many years of enjoyment and inspiration.

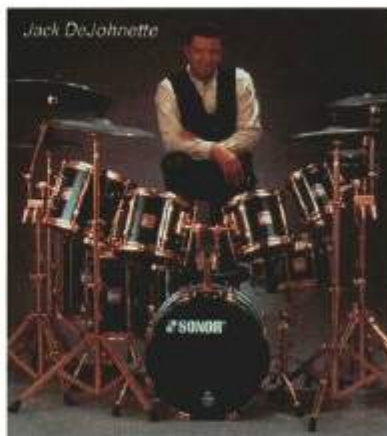
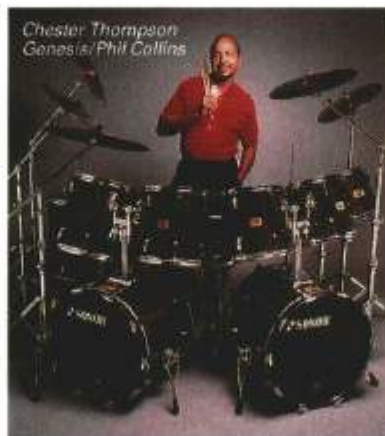
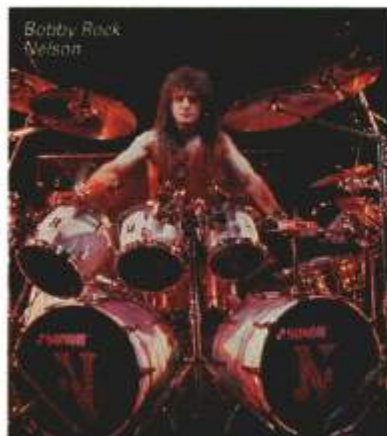
Phil Ferraro
Watertown NY

A Thank you very much for your kind remarks and your interest. I'm going to be splitting my time between playing and teaching in a more even manner from now on. I've already resumed private teaching in Los Angeles, and the response has been great. I love teaching, and it's fun to get back into that seat again. Anyone interested in contacting me about that—or about my current instructional video—can call my service number, which is (818) 769-4144.

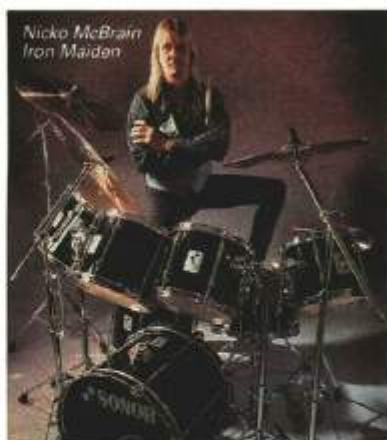
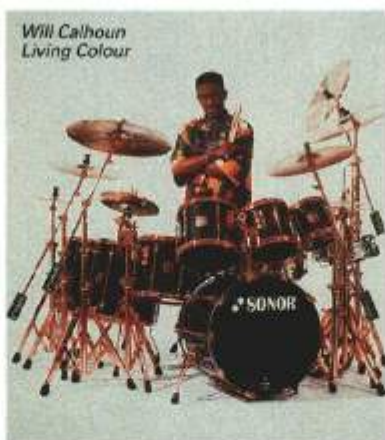
There is some talk about making a *Tonight Show* Band video; I spoke with Doc about it recently. We are also going to be touring in July; look for us in the northeastern part of the country—including Buffalo, New York, which should be close to you. Doc will probably continue to tour the band at least a couple of

times a year for the foreseeable future. In addition, I've been busy touring with my own jazz quintet, and that, too, will continue. Between all of that and doing some jazz festivals and cruises, I plan to keep very busy.

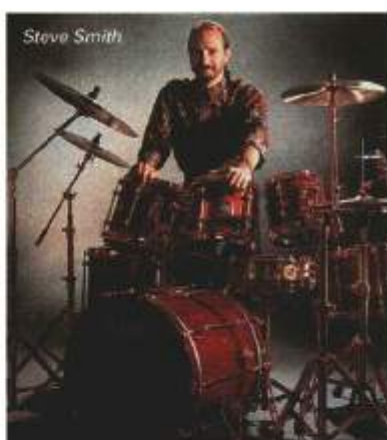
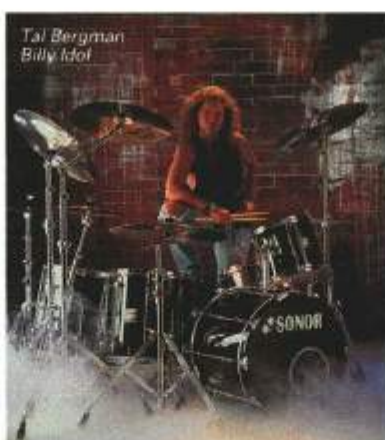
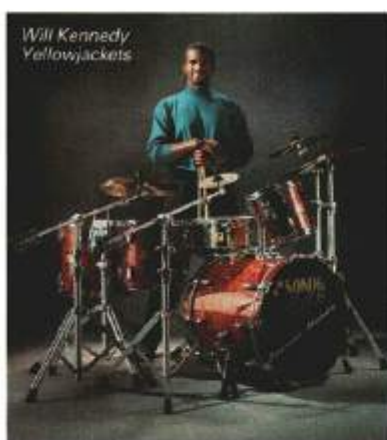




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Tony Williams photo by Michele Camerini, S.F., CA

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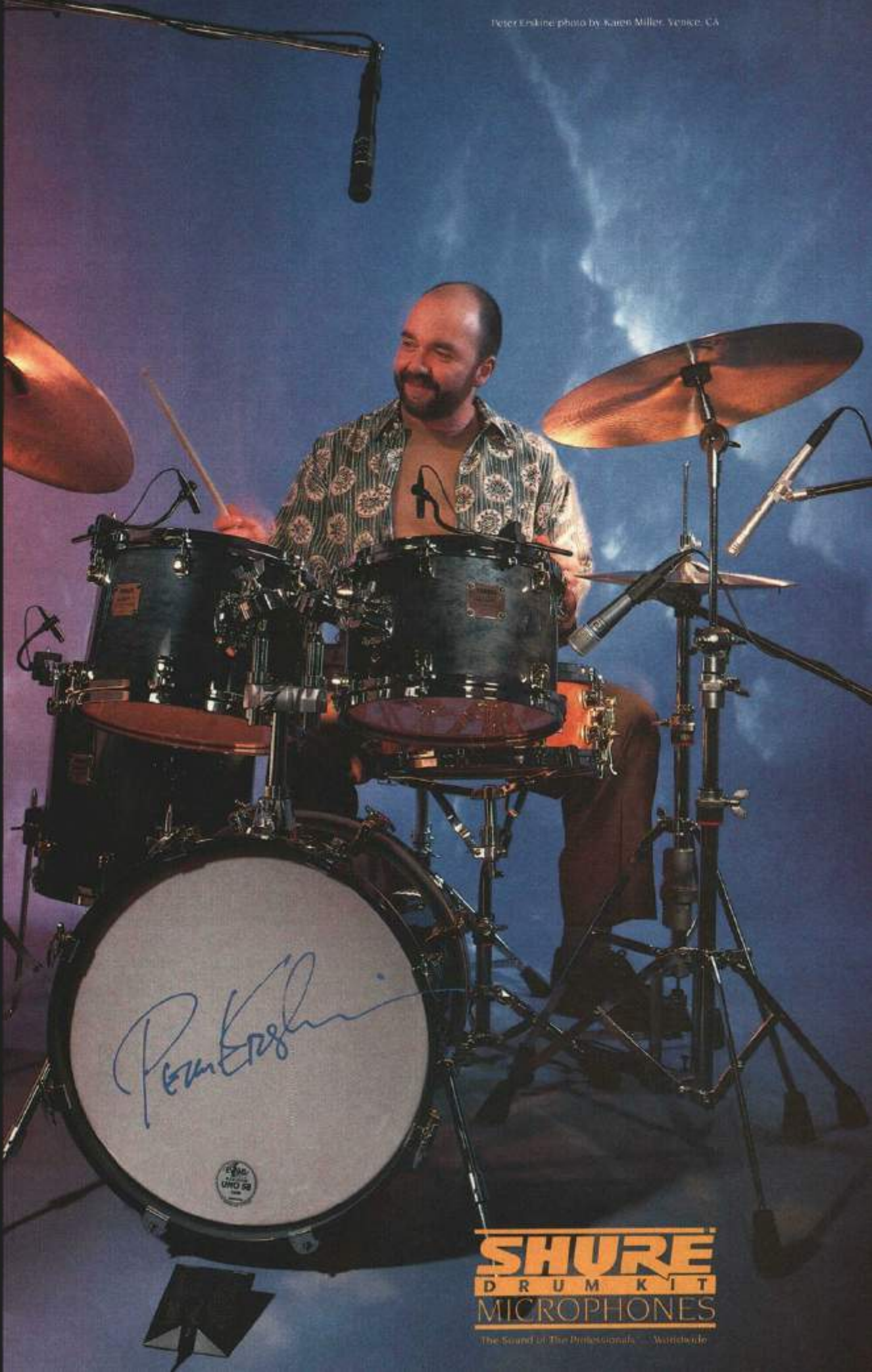
Toms: SM98A



Hi-Hat: SM94



Cymbals: SM81



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How Can Drums Be Silenced For Practicing?

Q I would like to know if you could recommend alternatives for reducing the level of "noise" when playing. I have a wife and two small children, and normal playing is simply too loud for them.

I have looked into electronic drumkits and headphones as a solution, but the kits were expensive, they didn't seem to handle the hi-hat or cymbals very well, and the dealers I spoke with didn't know much about them. I've also seen some drumset silencers, and I have heard about acoustical panels that absorb sound. I'm not sure where to go from here.

Curt Dann
Hamden CT

A You have several options open to you. The first is to exchange playing on the actual drumkit for playing on a practice pad kit. There are several on the market, and any sizeable music store or drumshop could help you check them out. You can also refer to *MD's* October '91 Buyer's Guide issue for companies to contact directly. (There's an entire section entitled "Practice Pads And Kits.") Of course, you won't get the physio/acoustical satisfaction of playing on real drums, but then neither will your family get the sonic assault.

A second option is to reduce the volume of your drumkit to tolerable levels (for others). H.Q. Percussion Products offers *Sound-Off Drumset Silencers* and *Cymbal Silencers* for this purpose. These are foam disks of various sizes designed to be placed directly on the playing surfaces of drums and cymbals (including the hi-hat). They are effective at reducing (although not *eliminating*) drumset sound, and stick response is acceptable. If your dealer doesn't stock the *Silencers*, H.Q. Percussion Products can be contacted at P.O. Box 430065, St. Louis, MO 63143. The *Bass Quiet*, a practice pad specifically designed to attach to a bass

drum, is available from Sharcon Percussion Products, at 5226 Laurel Canyon Blvd., No. Hollywood, CA 91607.

In addition to the *Cymbal Silencers* mentioned above, cymbal mufflers in a variety of sizes are also available from Drum Workshop. These are circles made of elastic bandage material designed to be fitted around the edge of a cymbal, thus preventing it from vibrating but leaving the playing surface exposed for normal stick response.

Electronic drums are, indeed, a very expensive choice if they are to be used exclusively for practicing. However, if you're interested in expanding your playing/performing into the electronic area, then the investment may be warranted. (You could be getting your drum practicing in while you are learning the ins and outs of the electronic equipment.) Improvements in the area of electronic cymbal triggers have recently been made by companies like MIDI-Cyms (840 W. Valley Blvd., Alhambra, CA 91803) and Electronic Percussion Systems (P.O. Box 7481, St. Cloud, MN 56302), and both MIDI-Cyms and KAT, Inc. now offer excellent electronic hi-hat controllers. However, you still need an acceptable source for cymbal *sounds*, and that gets into another area of options (and cost). You may find it more expedient to use real cymbals—albeit muffled in some way.

Sound-proofing some room in your home is always an option, but it's an expensive one. *MD* is barraged by letters requesting information on this operation every year, and the reason we haven't offered a feature article on the "definitive" method of sound-proofing a practice room is that there *is* no definitive method. Everything depends on how large your room is, how much you need to reduce the sound, how permanent you want the sound-proofing to be, how much you want to spend on materials and/or labor, and a dozen other variables. However, we know that some drummers have successfully overcome these hurdles

to create satisfactory practice environments. We invite those drummers to submit their ideas (succinctly, please!) to *Modern Drummer*, Sound-Proofing Ideas, 870 Pompton Ave., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. If and when we have a number of useful tips, we'll run them in a future *Shop Talk* column.

Who Makes A Coil-Spring Drumstick Holder?

Q I'm trying to locate a drumstick holder that I've seen in the past. It's fashioned out of what appears to be a large coil spring, which is clamped onto the bass drum hoop in a horizontal position. The sticks are placed in the empty spaces between the coils.

Don LaFave
Imperial Beach CA

A The holder you're referring to is Ludwig's *L-1324-SH Stick Holder*. If your local dealers don't stock it, they should be able to order one for you.

Who Sells Music Minus One Recordings?

Q Do you know where I can purchase *Music Minus One* albums or tapes? These are recordings of jazz tunes without the drummer on one side, and with the drummer playing on the other.

Henry Enswiler
Harrisburg PA

A The *Music Minus One* series includes over 700 titles, in jazz, pop, classical, and rock. All are available in cassette form; many are also available on LP. They feature complete tracks—less the instrument or vocal desired—and a booklet with a transcription of the part removed. To order a catalog or find information on where the *MMO* recordings might be available in your area, contact *MMO Music Group, Inc.*, 50 Buck-out St., Irvington, NY 10533, (914) 591-5100.





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Favorite Recordings:
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Cymbal Set Up

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 2) 18" 2000 Crash/10" 2000 Splash
 3) 18" 2000 China/14" 404 Medium Hi-Hat Top - stacked
 4) 20" 2000 China/14" 404 Medium Hi-Hat Top - stacked
 5) 20" 2000 China with 20" 2000 Crash inside / 14" 2000 Hi-Hat/Cup Chime
 6) 12" 2000 Splash/20" 2000 Crash
 7) 16" Prototype China with 13" 404 Medium Hi-Hat Top inside/20" 505 Ride with 20" 2002 Novo China on top
 8) 26" Sound Creation No. 3 Gong
 9) 10" 602 Heavy Bell/Cup Chime
 10) 8" 602 Heavy Bell/Cup Chime
 11) 15" Paiste Line Heavy Hi-Hat
 12) 13" 602 Heavy Bell/Cup Chime
 13) 8" Rude Splash(2), as Hi-Hat
 14) 12" 602 Heavy Bell/Cup Chime

MICHAEL BARSIMANTO

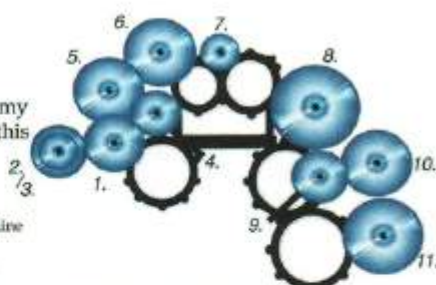
"Like a great conversation with my friends . . . Paiste cymbals does this for me."

Cymbal Set Up

1) 13" 602 Heavy Hi-Hat Top/ 13" Paiste Line Dark Crisp Hi-Hat Bottom
 2) 12" 3000 Rude Splash/12" 3000 Splash (as Hi-Hat)
 3) 8" 3000 Rude Splash inverted in a 5" Spoke
 4) 10" Paiste Line Splash
 5) 16" 3000 China
 6) 17" Paiste Line Mellow Crash
 7) 8" Paiste Line Splash
 8) 20" Paiste Line Dry Dark Ride
 9) 12" Paiste Line Heavy Hi-Hat
 10) 15" Paiste Line Mellow Crash
 11) 18" 602 China

Favorite Recordings:

The Green Album
 Eddie Jobson
That Was Then
 Wishful Thinking
City Magic
 Steve Bach



Michael, Pat, Will, and Terry

Los Angeles

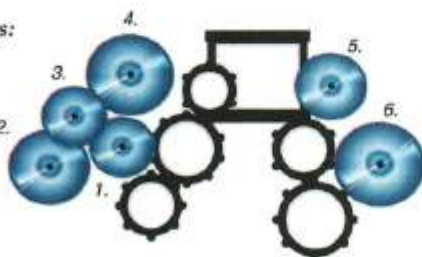
Artist Series

WILL KENNEDY

"As I think of reasons why I play Paiste cymbals, I recognize similarities between the cymbals and the qualities of a good drummer: Professional, consistent, musical, dynamic, able to diversify. It is a great feeling to know that my cymbals are always helping me to sound my best."

Favorite Recordings:

Greenhouse
 Yellowjackets
Live Wires
 Yellowjackets
One Music
 Bob Mintzer



Cymbal Set Up

1) 14" Sound Creation Dark Heavy Sound Edge Hi-Hat
 2) 18" Paiste Line Flatride
 3) 14" Sound Formula Thin Crash
 4) 19" Paiste Line Dry Ride
 5) 16" Sound Formula Full Crash
 6) 20" 2000 Sound Reflections Mellow China

PAT MASTELOTTO

"I've been asked to conjure up everything from a rainstorm in Nebraska, silk to steam, heavy as death or light as a sneeze! Warm or cold, Paiste has all the elements."

Cymbal Set Up

1) 13" 2000 Sound Edge Hi-Hat
 2) 8" 2002 Splash(2) stacked
 3) 10" Paiste Line Splash
 4) 18" Paiste Line Fast Crash
 5) 21" Paiste Line Dry Heavy Ride
 6) 18" Paiste Line Heavy China
 7) 13" Paiste Line Dark Crisp Hi-Hat
 8) 10" 2002 Splash with 10" 2002 Bell underneath
 9) 18" 2002 Flatride
 10) 20" 3000 Novo China
 11) 8" 602 Bell

Favorite Recordings:

Just Put Your Hands On The Screen
 Martin Briley
One Joy Bang
 Cock Robin
Chalk Hills And Children
 XTC



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1956 Corvette. Photo courtesy of General Motors.

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Performance Custom also offers larger 22" and 24" bass drums and today's popular deep size toms. The timeless appearance of Abalone proves that as styles come and go, style doesn't.

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Performance Custom and Performance Session are both available in either black or white Abalone finishes.

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TONY WILLIAMS





A MASTER'S PERSPECTIVE

By Bill Milkowski

Pacing around the control room with a fat cigar jutting out the side of his mouth, Tony Williams is a portrait of swaggering intensity—Edward G. Robinson playing Little Caesar—as he supervises the mixes of his new Blue Note album, *The Story Of Neptune*.

Working closely with engineer Bob Brockman, he listens intently to playbacks of a brisk, driving Latin number, "Neptune: The Overture." With Tony's keen ears and Bob's quick fingers at the board, they make a fast, efficient team as they home in on the ultimate blend. "A little more in the toms," Tony commands, like Captain Kirk at the helm of the Starship Enterprise. And when Bob suggests that they bring up the bass drum just a bit, Tony nods in agreement, as if to say, "Make it so," in the manner of another captain of the Enterprise, Jean-Luc Picard.

Satisfied with the mix, they move on to the luscious ballad "Neptune: Fear Not." Wallace Roney's muted trumpet conjures up haunting memories of Miles Davis—shades of *E.S.P.* Tony feels it too. He takes a deep puff on his cigar and gazes at the ceiling. An audible sigh escapes his lips.

The melancholy mood is suddenly broken by "Crime Scene," a jaunty funk-swing number in the Horace Silver/Art Blakey tradition. Tony breaks up the beat in odd, unpredictable ways, coaxing the other musicians with assertive bursts from the snare before unleashing on the kit at the tag. He hears the sizzle and seems pleased.

Tony's signature ride cymbal work sets the tone for a unique rendition of the Beatles tune "Blackbird," a pleasant ditty done up with a swinging new suit of clothes. As the tune fades, Tony turns to me and says, "Get ready for this next one." A sly smile breaks across his face as the tune begins. It's "Neptune: Creatures Of Conscience," a mindblowing showcase of Tony's legendary chops, guaranteed to leave aspiring drummers gasping in awe.

Switching gears, he moves from polyrhythmic bombast to sublime lyricism on a velvety smooth rendition of "Poinciana," a piece further distinguished by Tony's rare use of brushes. The album closes on a rousing note with Freddie Hubbard's "Birdlike," a supersonic 4/4 romp paced by Tony's inimitable hi-hat/ride cymbal pulse. A flurry of drums and cymbals at the tag puts the finishing touches on this latest Tony Williams project, his finest effort as a leader since signing on with Blue Note back in 1985.

A boy wonder with Miles Davis more than a quarter of a century ago (he came aboard at age 17 and made his first recorded appearance with Miles on the 1963 quintet album *Seven Steps To Heaven*), Tony has attained sage-like status in the jazz world. A world-class drummer, venerated bandleader, and respected composer, he has become a mentor to his young sidemen—trumpeter Wallace Roney, pianist Mulgrew Miller, bassist Ira Coleman, and saxophonist Billy Pierce. His torso may be thicker, his butt wider, his demeanor a bit more judicious and professorial, but at 47 he still plays with the burning, youthful enthusiasm he exhibited through his groundbreaking work with the Miles Davis Quintet (1963-1968) and his own revolutionary fusion band Lifetime (with organist Larry Young, guitarist John McLaughlin, and later bassist Jack Bruce).

Tony Williams was born in Chicago on December 12, 1945. The son of a tenor saxophonist, he grew up in Boston and began studying with Alan Dawson at age nine. By 13, he was sitting in frequently with organist Johnny "Hammond" Smith, an experience that later served as a role model for his guitar/organ/drums trio, Lifetime. Tony worked around Boston as a teenager with multi-reedman Sam Rivers and worked in the house rhythm section at Connelly's, where he backed visiting headliners. One such headliner who came through town was hard bop alto sax great Jackie McLean, who was amazed by the 16-year-old's drumming prowess. Tony eventually moved to New York in December of 1962 to work with McLean.

In May of 1963, he got the call from Miles. His volcanic drumming style, a bridge between the complex polyrhythms of Elvin Jones and the free-floating pulsations of Sunny Murray, became a catalytic force in the second great Miles Davis Quintet, which featured pianist Herbie Hancock, bassist Ron Carter, and saxophonist Wayne Shorter.

During his tenure with Miles, Williams moonlighted on a number of Blue Note sessions, including Herbie Hancock's

Maiden Voyage, Jackie McLean's *One Step Beyond*, Andrew Hill's *Point Of Departure*, Wayne Shorter's *The Soothsayer*, and Eric Dolphy's *Out To Lunch*. He debuted as a leader on Blue Note in 1964 with *Life Time* and followed that up the next year with *Spring*, both albums serving as a showcase for his budding compositional prowess while also revealing Tony's connection to the avant-garde movement of the day.

In 1968, he left Miles to blaze a new direction in music with Lifetime. Their initial offering, *Emergency* (Polydor), is considered a fusion classic. Its bristling energy predated Miles Davis's own experiments in that direction with *Jack Johnson* by two years, and spawned such offshoot projects as McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra and later John Abercrombie's Timeless trio with Jack DeJohnette and Jan Hammer. A mid-'70s edition of the band, dubbed The New Lifetime, featured the incredible guitar pyrotechnics of Allan Holdsworth, but was considered less successful than his earlier outfit.

In 1977, Tony moved from New York to his present country home in Marin County, just north of San Francisco. That year he reunited with his Miles Davis Quintet bandmates to form V.S.O.P., an all-star acoustic jazz quintet named after the finest cognac money could buy. It was an appropriate name for a group that also boasted such names as Wayne Shorter, Ron Carter, Herbie Hancock, and Freddie Hubbard, who filled Miles' spot in the quintet.

Tony broke a long recording dry spell as a leader in 1979 with *The Joy Of Flying*, a hastily thrown together project for Columbia that featured an all-star cast including Cecil Taylor, Tom Scott, George Benson, Michael Brecker, and Herbie Hancock. Switching gears in 1981, he went back out on tour with V.S.O.P. In 1982, he appeared on the debut album by 19-year-old trumpet sensation Wynton Marsalis, and in 1983 V.S.O.P. continued to tour and record, with Marsalis replacing Hubbard.

Tony entered into his second phase with Blue Note in 1985 with the release of *Foreign Intrigue*, an album that blended his brilliant kit playing with DMX drum machine and Simmons electronic drums in a modern mainstream setting. That album featured veterans Ron Carter and vibist Bobby Hutcherson, and it also marked Tony's initial contact with up-and-coming stars Mulgrew Miller and Wallace Roney. With 1987's *Civilization*, he hit on a new formula with Wallace, Mulgrew, and saxophonist Billy Pierce. Their chemistry became apparent on 1988's *Angel Street*, and they took it up a notch the following year with *Native Heart*.

Now with *The Story Of Neptune*, the Tony Williams Quintet has cohered into an incredibly interactive unit that stands as one of the finest acoustic jazz groups on the scene.

Following the intensive mixing session at the studio, we cabbed uptown to Tony's hotel. At the bar, the conversation flowed as freely as the V.S.O.P.

BM: The last time you did a major interview with *Modern Drummer*, you were just beginning your second phase with Blue Note. So much has happened since then. You have a whole body of work with this new band.

TW: Yeah, these five years for me have been an incredible learning experience and something that I hadn't forseen. It's afforded me the opportunity to work with a bunch of excellent musicians that have given their all to this project.

The reason I started the band was to see if what I had been studying in the previous years had taken hold. Basically, I wanted to see if I had learned anything from the composition classes I had taken. *The Joy Of Flying* came up so quickly. Columbia said, "Make this record." But I didn't have anything prepared, and I couldn't write quickly, like a composer should be able to. I realized then that I had to acquire some tools that I didn't have. So I set about gaining those tools, from 1980 to 1986.

BM: A different kind of woodshedding.

TW: Yeah. I had never had a band like this. I had other types of bands, and I had *been* in bands like this. But I had never put a band together like this myself. So it was kind of scary to try it. I didn't know if there was an audience for it, and I didn't know if

the music that I was going to write was viable for me—if I could write the things that I like to play, that's what I mean by being "viable."

This new record sounds better than I had hoped it would. And I like that experience because it comes from being able

"Drums are meant to be loud. It's like telling a piccolo player, 'Don't play high' or telling a trumpet player, 'Don't be so brassy' or telling a bass player, 'Don't play low.' Volume, physicality, and aggressiveness are part of what drumming is all about."

to let go of things. There's a bunch of ideas that I had for this latest project that didn't make it on the record. In other words, I didn't force something. I let myself be open to things and just let it happen.

BM: How were you composing pieces like "Hand Jive" and "Pee Wee" back with Miles in the '60s?



Photo by Rick Malkin

TW: I was composing those things the way I still compose now. Those things just came to me. I'd sit down at the piano and play, and they'd come up.

BM: So you always had keyboard knowledge.

TW: Yeah, I have harmony and theory knowledge. I could always read. But composition is different. You know, really *knowing* how to structure things. Those other things just came to me. But actually sitting down and saying, "I want to form a tune like this," not just happenstance, not just, "Oh, that sounds good, I'll use that." Where you actually say, "I want to do this and I want to do that"—that's when you're a composer, when you can actually take something and direct it the way you want to, working with the logic of harmonic rhythm and melodic cohesiveness.

The other part of it is, back with Miles it took me ages to write because I'd agonize over it. If I had an idea, I wouldn't know how to develop it. Now through taking composition classes, I know how to take three notes and develop them into more. Before I would take an idea and say, "Gee, that's a nice idea, but what comes next?" And that was the thing about becoming a composer. I can write fast now. I can take something and build upon it. You know, those tunes like "Hand Jive," "Black Comedy," and "Pee Wee" took me a long time to put together.

BM: What about the stuff on your first two Blue Note albums [*Spring and Life Time*]?

TW: Those are in another vein. Those are more sort of free-playing, avant-garde kinds of things. And they came out really well.

BM: Is that kind of coming out of your experience with Sam Rivers in Boston?

TW: No, those were coming out of my experience with a lot of things—my love for Ornette Coleman's music at the time, Cecil Taylor's music, Eric Dolphy—all the things that I had heard that I was really involved in. I was listening to a lot of Bartok at that time, every day. Stockhausen and a lot of Stravinsky, too. So the influences were wide-ranging.

And you have to remember, the times were different. The times you live in have to do with what you produce. For instance, the '70s for a lot of people were a reaction to the '60s. And if you didn't live in the '60s, then you didn't have to react to it. I think it's funny to hear people talk about the electric music that jazz went into in the '70s, especially from guys who were toddlers in the '60s, you know what I mean? And they start passing judgment on music that bands came out with, either jazz-rock or fusion music. But they didn't have to deal with the times. You know, I was playing music in the '60s. So I had to think to myself, "What am I going to do next?" But if you didn't have to do that, of course, you can sit back on Mount Olympus and pass judgment on what people did in the '70s.

BM: You've gone through a lot of phases, and now it seems you're being acknowledged as an accomplished composer, apart from being known for your drumming. I think some of

the tunes that you have written will stand up over time. "Sister Cheryl," for example.

TW: Yeah, well that was one of my goals, even when I was a youngster—to write music that other people would want to play, not just to hear people say, "Wow, you can write music." That wasn't necessarily enough for me.

BM: On each of your albums there are at least a couple of tunes that transcend your chops on the kit. They are strong pieces of music. But then, there's a piece like "Creatures of Conscience" from the new album that I think probably only you could play. I don't

think there are many bands that could cut that tune.

TW: That's also something that I wanted to do, a drum piece that was all written. It's kind of a jazz thing that I've always heard in my head, like a big band with shout choruses. And it's just a long form—no bridge, no solos, just these melodies that suggest other things.

BM: It's very much like a percussion ensemble.

TW: Yeah, the whole band is like a big drum laying down the groove, and I'm playing melody around it. That's part of what we do with this band. There's a lot of things I want to do in this genre of acoustic



Photo by Rick Malkin

jazz with the classic setup of two horns, piano, bass, and drums—the quintet sound that I grew up with. I want people to hear it and to know that it's a living language. This is not some museum stuff. It's not Latin or Esperanto, something that isn't spoken anymore. And I also wanted to give it some of the power and some of the other things that you don't generally hear in this genre. And the way I record the drums has a lot to do with the bigness of the sound.

BM: You didn't have that kind of presence in the Miles quintet.

TW: Right, you didn't have that back then. Again, it was a different time. And the things I've learned about what I want to do—even through just hearing the music of today—I can bring some of that bigness and power to a group that's just acoustic and make it work. And you don't hear that with other bands. That's why I think this band is really unique. And I'm just so thrilled to have Mulgrew Miller, Wallace Roney, Billy Pierce, and Ira Coleman, because they're all committed to the band. I'm just so happy that it's been five years. If we can get a sixth year, I'll be even more pleased. But those are some of the things that I wanted to accomplish with this quintet, and I feel that I've done that.

BM: How would you

compare the way you lead your band to the way Miles ran his bands?

TW: Well, because I'm a drummer, I do things differently than somebody else would do it. See, I don't play piano or saxophone or what normally would be called a scale instrument, so I have to pay a little bit more attention to detail than somebody else might. They can do a lot of things quicker than I can. So I take a little more time, and I listen to rehearsal tapes of the band a lot to make sure that certain things are the way I want them to be—because I'm the one that has to take either the credit or the abuse if it's good or bad.

BM: Sounds like you're more of a perfectionist in the process than Miles was.

TW: Yeah, I have to be because I'm a drummer, and a drummer's role is different than a horn player's. And secondly, drummers aren't thought of as having these abilities that other people have. So I've also had to work very hard at not having a chip on my shoulder. I try to have that not come across in my music or in anything I do. Because, you know, people kind of

look down on drummers.

BM: Think so? Still?

TW: Sure. Well, when I grew up, that's the way it was. There's a joke. What do you call people who hang out with musicians? Drummers. And so the drummer was always the least paid—I remember people telling me that I couldn't get as much as the other guys in the band because they had to pay to get the drums to the job. So immediately you're penalized for playing the drums. And people think of the drummer as the least educated, the most uninhibited—you know, like a wild man. All those kinds of things. So that's what I've been dealing with throughout my career, and I try not to wear that as a defensive thing. I don't go around saying, "It's because I'm a drummer." But I know that it's still there. So I have to make sure that the records don't sound like a drummer's record, that they sound like music.

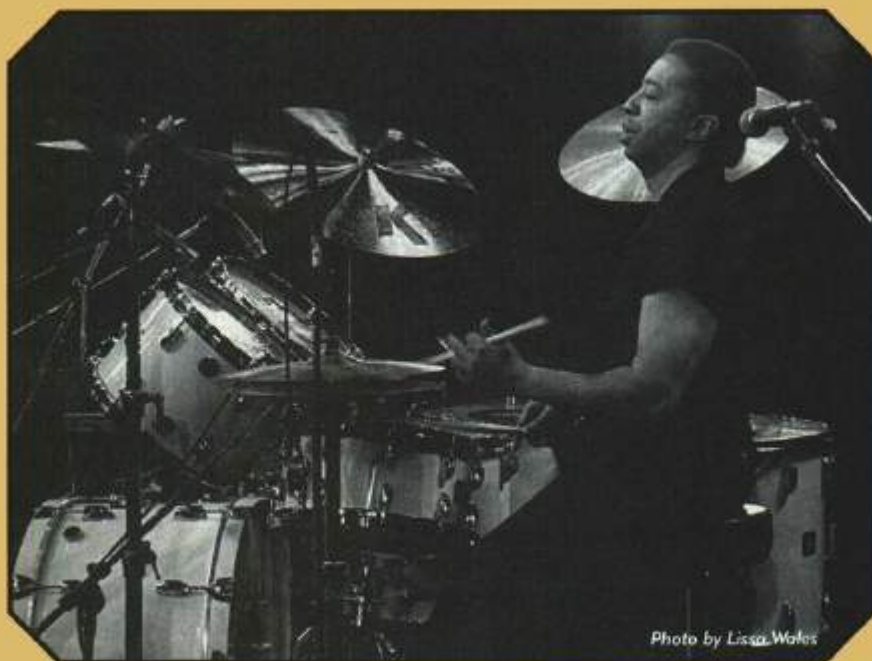


Photo by Lissa Wales

BM: I think you've been able to accomplish that in this second Blue Note phase. How do you look back on *Foreign Intrigue*? That was done before you had settled on this concept.

TW: Yeah, exactly. It was nothing that I really thought about. But the record was a godsend because through that project I met Wallace and Mulgrew. It was almost like fate because there was another trumpet player who was supposed to make that session, but some-

thing came up. I didn't know that he wasn't going to be at the first rehearsal. I walked in expecting to see him, and there was Wallace. So it was great, just amazing. And as I look back on it, it turned out better that way. Just another one of those things, as I say...it turned out

"If you think you're more important than the drums, you've got another think coming."

better than you even thought it would. If you're able to let go of your preconceptions and go with what is happening, sometimes wonderful things happen. This band has taught me a lot about myself. It's helped me in a lot of ways.

BM: On *Angel Street* you had these little solo drum interludes. And now those kinds of things are more

continued on page 68

Fates Warning's Mark Zonder



By Matt Peiken

Photos By Alex Solca

Mark Zonder is more of a music *critic* than he is a music *fan*. That, perhaps more than anything else, shapes the direction he takes with his playing. Deliberate, dynamic, polyrhythmic, and completely unpredictable, his approach goes against the grain of traditional heavy metal fare. And, quite simply, that's the only way he would have it.

"I can't stand ninety-nine percent of the metal that's out there right now because the drumming is so unimaginative," Zonder says. "People say metal is limiting, but I think players limit themselves. I just decided I wasn't going to do that to myself and that, whatever style of music I played, I was going to make the drumming as interesting as possible—to play *and* to listen to." It's a good thing for Zonder, then, that he's found a band that allows him plenty of room to make good on his self-promise.

Fates Warning is far from a household name, even in metal circles. Many who've heard only a brief earshot of the band have been quick to write it off as a Queensryche clone. But that label proves to be, upon closer inspection, a big injustice. Like Queensryche, Fates Warning employs an operatic lead singer (Ray Alder) and goes out of its way to throw listeners a curve with healthy doses of odd time signatures and engaging sweeps of intensity. But Zonder, through mental and physical dexterity, creates percussive novellas—like songs within songs—that few rock drummers ever approach.

All of that manifests itself on *Parallels*, the band's fifth record (and second with Zonder). The album marks Fates Warning's most forward attempt at elusive commercial success, but shorter, more accessible songs do nothing to water down Zonder's contribution. On the contrary, they enhance it. The resultant combination of factors makes *Parallels* one of the most unheralded artistic successes in metal this year.

MP: Is album-oriented rock radio something this band has always shot for?

MZ: No, Fates Warning never targeted radio until this album. We specifically decided to do something that was accessible to more people, but still keep a product that was real true to what we do. It's not selling out or anything, but it has to do with structures of songs. We're in a position now where we want to sell a lot of records.

MP: Is it hard to bridge that gap, between keeping with the band's musical vision and making music that's more accessible?

MZ: Actually, in a way it was a little easier for us, because you're talking about a band that has a pretty wide musical range. There are so many tastes in this band—from Paula Abdul to Yes to everything in between. I think that's one of the things that's special about this band.

"Probably one of the best things I ever did was get away from rock and metal and start playing different things, which I ended up applying to rock and metal."

It's not five guys who have grown up together and listened to the same music and ripped off the same people. We all have different influences, which comes across in the music, and that makes us different than most.

MP: But you're relatively new to the band. How did you first meet up with the other guys?

MZ: I had a band in '83 called Warlord that was on the same label as Fates Warning. We did a couple of albums and the guys in Fates Warning were really big fans. They came out here to L.A. to record one of their records, and I used to work with a few engineers as a drum specialist—tuning drums in the studio. They used some of my different drums and cymbals, and we just met up from there. We kept up with each other after Warlord died, and we developed a relationship over the years.

MP: Was Warlord doing things that touched on what Fates Warning was into at the time?

MZ: Oh, very much so. It was in that classic heavy metal vein à la Rush, Deep Purple, Rainbow, Uriah Heep—those

kinds of bands. This was between '82 and '84, and it was very much a time when metal was non-existent here in the U.S. It was around the same time that Iron Maiden and the whole new wave of British heavy metal was breaking, and it was a tough time for us. The band was well-received by its fans, but it was just one of those things that wasn't meant to be.

MP: So did Fates Warning come at a perfect time for you?

MZ: There were a couple of years there where I did a lot of different things. After Warlord died, I spent a little time looking for a band in the same style, but I just got sick of the same old thing—double-bass and screaming vocals. I've always been into different kinds of music. So I started studying funk and a more linear type of playing, and I hooked up with a couple of bands. They weren't great

bands, but the whole object after learning different skills was to apply them to a band situation. That's where you find out whether you've really got it and if you really understand it all. At one point, I was rehearsing with a full-blown funk band from 3:00 to 5:00. Then I'd play with a sort of new wave, very straight, electronics-oriented band from 5:00 to 8:00. And from then until about midnight I rehearsed with a rock band. That happened here in my studio for about three months, five days a week, and it really developed things for me. Probably one of the best things I ever did was get away from rock and metal and start playing different things, which I ended up applying to rock and metal.

MP: Was it that you just didn't know what you wanted to do musically at the time?

MZ: Since I was really young, I've heard things in my head differently than I could actually physically play them, and I wanted to try to bridge that gap. I heard a lot more sounds than just kick, snare, and tom. I ended up in a band that had former members of Animotion, and I got



into the whole electronic thing. It was all pads, and I was playing to a click, which was driven by a sequencer for keyboards. So I got fully engulfed in that. At first I was a little out of place. I wasn't hanging out with rock guys, but it was basically going to school for a year. I punched enough buttons and looked at enough computer screens and programmed enough stuff that I have it down. Ninety-nine percent of the things I learned there I apply to what I'm doing now. I'm playing to a click and using electronics, and I'm doing a lot outside of the straight 2 and 4, kick-and-snare type of playing. And that would never have happened if I hadn't gone on to another band and musical situation.

MP: Did you grow up in the middle of the L.A. music scene?

MZ: No, I was born in Detroit, and we moved to the Bay Area when I was ten. Then at about 22, I moved out to L.A. when I had an offer to play with a band, but it turned out to be a big farce. It was the classic story of moving out to L.A. on a prayer and a suitcase. I was young and naive, but it was the best thing I ever did. If I had just given myself a month or a year for things to work out, I probably wouldn't still be here. But I settled in and persevered and put up with a lot of smooth-talking people to get into some situations that have actually helped my career.

Another good thing was that I didn't have to do the starving-musician routine. I got a job at a collection agency as an office manager, and I had friends who helped me out. I love L.A. now, probably because I'm settled here. Granted, it has its bad points, just like anywhere else. But this is where the music scene's at, and I like being around people.

MP: Did you take drum lessons?

MZ: Oh, yeah, for years! I took my first lesson when I was seven—my mom still has the receipt. When I moved to L.A., I took lessons from a lot of big-name players, but it wasn't really happening. It killed my bank account, and I didn't feel I was really getting anywhere. Then a few years ago, I hooked up with a guy named Craig Yamek, who was a friend of David Garibaldi. He's just an incredible drummer—more of a jazz-funk guy, not a real rock guy. It was one of those things

Mark's Kit

Drumset: GMS
 A. 6 1/2 x 14 brass snare
 B. 3 1/2 x 14 brass snare
 C. 8 x 10 tom
 D. 10 x 12 tom
 E. 14 x 14 floor tom
 F. 16 x 16 floor tom
 G. 16 x 24 bass drum

Hardware: Drum Workshop bass drum pedals (with plastic beaters) and a DW hi-hat stand, all toms mounted on RIMS

Cymbals: Zildjian
 1. 12" *EFX* hats
 2. 16" *China Boy* low
 3. 17" medium-thin crash
 4. 16" medium-thin crash
 5. 18" medium-thin crash
 6. 20" *Earth* ride
 7. 13" K/Z hats (closed)
 8. 10" K splash
 9. 18" *China Boy* high
 10. 20" pang

aa. LP *Spike* triggers

Sticks: Pro'Mark 5B Hickory model

Heads: Remo coated Ambassador on snare, clear Ambassadors on tops and bottoms of toms as well as on bass drum batter and front heads. (Album cover art is painted on front bass drum heads.)

where he'd charge me \$10 for an afternoon, and I came out of those sessions with so much stuff that it kept me busy for weeks. Most of it dealt with just opening things up—polyrhythms, playing with all four limbs, different stickings. He was definitely someone who gave me one thing that led to about fifteen others.

MP: Did you have a goal at that time of eventually hooking up with a band you could apply those things to?

MZ: I always hoped to, but the bottom line is that I liked playing the drums, period, so I was fine by myself. I didn't put a lot of pressure on myself for it to happen within a week or a month or whenever. If I got a chance to play in a different kind of band where I couldn't apply the progressive, fusion-type things, that would have been fine, too. I played in a band called Plain English that was the ultimate 2 and 4 gig, but what was cool about it was all the electronics. So instead of riffing and playing a lot of chops, I was playing pads for sounds,

and it was just a big learning experience. You can sit at home and program all this cool stuff. But unless you take it out, rehearse it in a band, and play it in front of people, *and* figure out what to do if the sequencer goes down and things like that, you're not going to get the full experience of electronics.

MP: You also seem really business-minded. I mean, not everybody owns an eleven-room rehearsal studio. How did you fall into that?

MZ: I've always been sort of a businessman, and it was just an opportunity that came along. In the Warlord days, we all moved into this small building where we lived and rehearsed. When that fell apart, I wound up with 1,000 square feet in a 10,000-square-foot building. Time went by and friends of mine would come up and rehearse. It just turned into something I started making money at, and the opportunity arose with the landlord to take over more and more of the building. I eventually wound up with all 10,000 feet, and now we have eleven rooms with

one soundstage and a professional recording studio with double walls, double doors, and sand-loaded floors.

MP: Changing the subject, I notice you use traditional grip.

MZ: I always have, since I was seven years old. I don't have the matched-grip thing down at all, and I've spent so much time playing traditional grip that I get just as much power out of it as I would if I went matched. I have a lot more speed and dexterity this way, too, and I like the way it feels. And I'm a traditionalist at heart. All the guys I love play traditional—Steve Smith, Dave Weckl, Vinnie, Gadd.

MP: When you finally got together with Fates Warning, did they share the same musical vision you had at the time?

MZ: Sort of yes and sort of no. The albums that they'd done in the past were a little different from what they were going to be doing on their next album, which turned out to be *Perfect Symmetry*. I liked the guitar playing and the

continued on page 82



Male Vocalists On Drummers

None of the following interviewees needs an introduction. They are eight of the most celebrated vocalists in their individual genres of music. But, why singers in a *drum* magazine, you might ask. Well, many of you drummers aspire to work with artists such as these. Hopefully this article will give you insight into what artists of this caliber need from a drummer—to help you prepare for your future.

by Robyn Flans

Clint Black

RF: As a vocalist, what do you need from a drummer in the studio?

CB: Dick Gay's been the only drummer I've worked with, in or out of the studio. [Note: Since this interview, Black used Eddie Bayers on his most recent album.] Dick is a great drummer. We had just asked James Stroud if he wanted to produce the album. He heard the demos, which had either a drum machine or some other drummers. James said, "These guys can play, but I have to come and see if your drummer can do it." I told Dick about this, who was just reading an article on James Stroud in *Modern Drummer*. He held it up and got this look on his face: "James Stroud is coming to hear me?!"

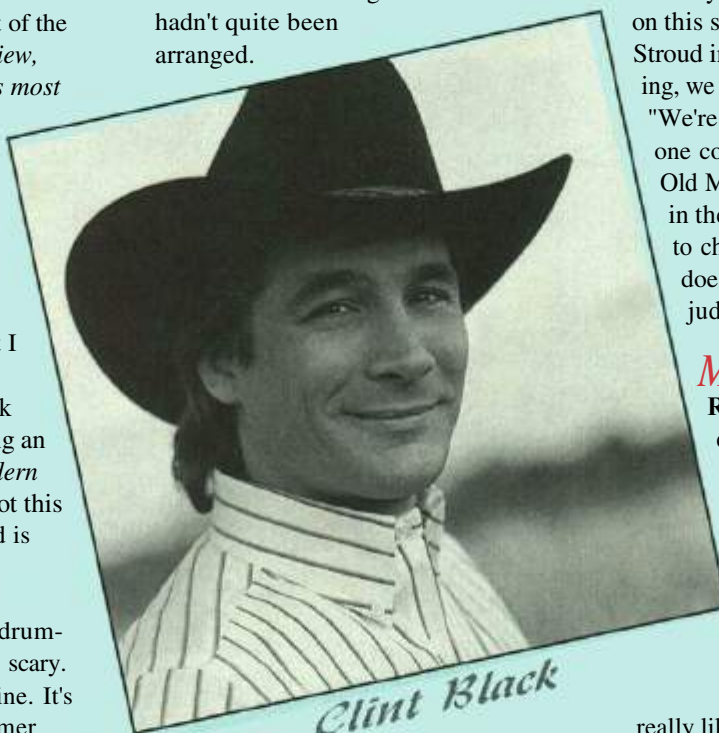
RF: I guess he passed the test.

CB: He sure did. He's a solid drummer. He's got perfect time; it's scary. He's almost like a drum machine. It's easier for me to follow a drummer than to lead one. I try to settle in and lock in with him. Every now and then I'm going to get ahead or behind the beat, but the idea is for him not to stray from the beat. If he's following me and the band is following him, then the next thing you know, it's a train wreck.

RF: What does your music need from

a drummer in the studio?

CB: Good timing. We arranged a lot of the parts on the other instruments, but all the little things on the drums hadn't quite been arranged.



Clint Black

So it was important that Dick be able to concentrate on the tempo, the timing, locking in, and holding the beat, but he also had to be creative and come up with fills that are unobtrusive. In country music, you don't exactly go into a tom fill every time the measure ends.

RF: Did you use a click track at all?

CB: Sometimes he did, but Dick was real good about knowing when not to. He'd say, "I want to chase a click track on this song." Especially with James Stroud in the studio, if it wasn't working, we all knew it. He would say, "We're just going to have to play this one cold," or on a song like "The Old Man," where it changes feels in the chorus, Dick said, "Let's try to chase the click here and see if it doesn't help us lock in." It's a judgement call.

Michael McDonald

RF: What do you like from a drummer live?

MM: Live, what makes a really big difference for me is the sound of a guy's drums, and if he has a really good instinct for how his drums sound. Of course he has to know how to play them. I think for live, too, what I really like is energy level. Every drummer is different, and you wind up liking different drummers for different things.

I've worked with one drummer for a long time—George Perilli—and what I find with him is that he seems to have a lot of the capabilities that a lot of my favorite drummers have. Good time is a must. I think what really

makes songs build in intensity is the ability to have them not fall apart in the transition parts. When you're going from a verse into a chorus, it's important that when you come out, you've maintained that common thread of tempo, so that the songs and all the other things about the

songs—the chord progressions and key changes—don't have the wind knocked out of them by the fact that the drummer has lost the tempo and is now dragging a little or speeding up too much and not in the pocket anymore. That's the main thing in both cases, the pocket.

RF: You mentioned that George had all the qualities of all your favorite drummers. Like what?

MM: He has a good understanding of the subtleties of certain grooves. Shuffles are hard, especially live. They tend to be played balls-to-the-wall by the more inexperienced drummers or a little too swing-y. A lot of times you want to have a real driving shuffle, but you also don't want the hi-hat to start sounding like straight 16ths. When a guy is really trying to lay into it, he tends to lose the subtleties of certain grooves like shuffles. So what I'm trying to say, in a nutshell, is that I need somebody who can play with a lot of intensity and not lose the more subtle dynamics of the groove he's playing. Like when he's playing a mid-tempo R&B groove, he's not bowling over the thing just so he can keep the intensity up. He's able to pull the backbeat back and put it in the pocket and still hit the drums hard without losing that overall feel for the thing. I find that's where I've really had great luck with George.

Another great drummer like that is Tris Imboden. He and George are great live drummers because they have a lot of the sensibilities that the great studio players have, but they really know how to translate those to a live situation and get the optimum intensity out of their performance.

RF: What's important to you in the studio?

MM: A lot of great live drummers who really don't have a lot of studio experience tend to go in the studio and want to bang away and play with the dynamics and the intensity that they use live. A lot of times that's not what works. You have to

take into consideration the sound of the studio and the sound of your kit with the mic's that are being used. You have to be flexible and understand what's going on concerning the environment you're in.

RF: I know you've recorded with Gadd, Porcaro—who am I missing?

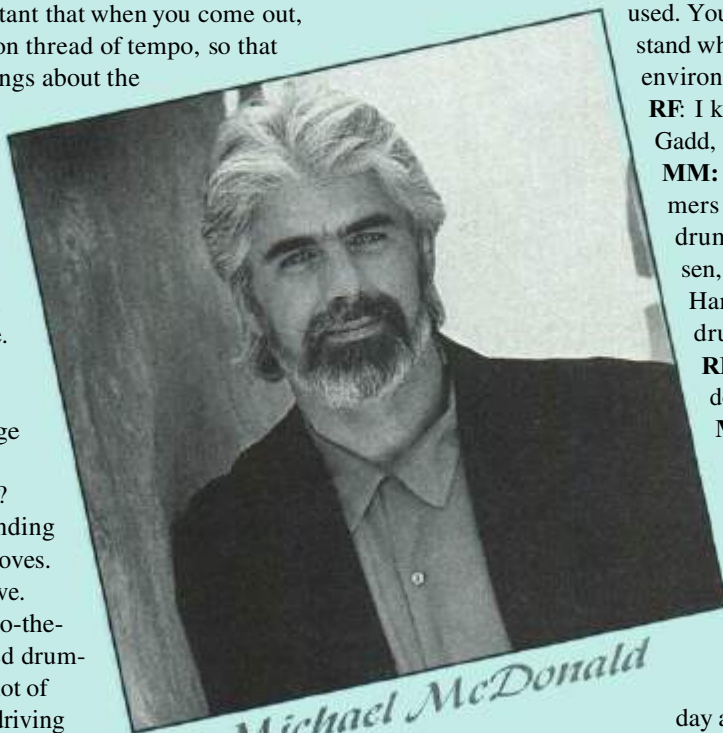
MM: Vinnie Colaiuta. The drummers in the Doobies are great drummers as well—Keith Knudsen, Chet McCracken, and John Hartman. Keith was a great drummer in the studio.

RF: What kind of drum sound do you go for in the studio?

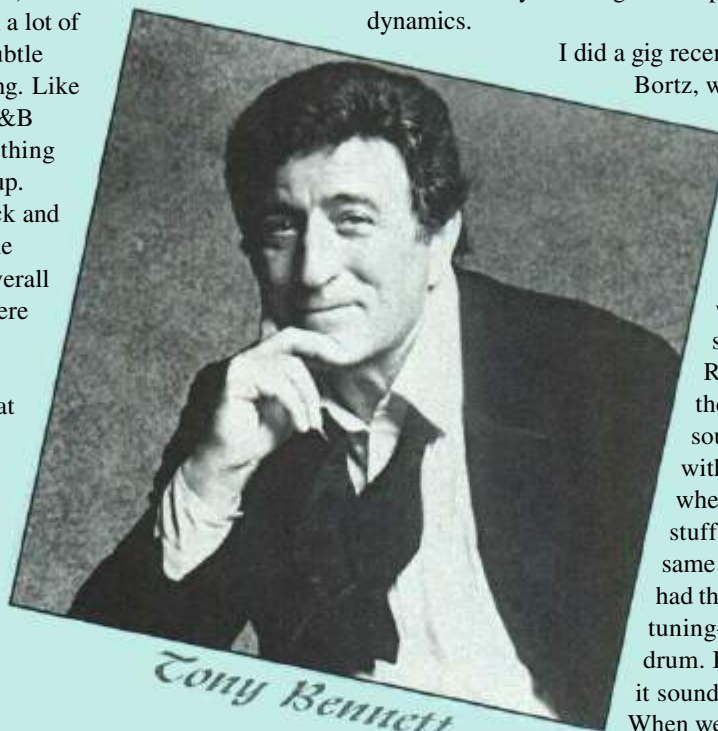
MM: I tend to like to have drums explode for me, to have that intensity and to speak in different dynamic ranges. You'll find that you use one snare more than any other because it has the dynamic range that you can get the most out of. But in this

day and age of guys coming in with six or seven snare drums, it gives you a lot of flexibility, and I do enjoy that. On the other hand, I've played gigs with guys who don't have all the samplers and the ultimate-sounding snare drums, but who know how to play. There's a lost art of really knowing how to play the drumset with dynamics.

I did a gig recently with a guy named Bob Bortz, who I grew up with, and he brought out this old set of Rogers drums. It was a political rally held in this roller-skating rink in a town where we used to do a lot of club work, and we played all this old Kinks stuff and Zombies and old R&B. And when he played the Kinks stuff, the snare sounded just like the record, with the big rimshot. And when we played the old R&B stuff, it sounded just like the same drum Al Jackson used. He had that ability—without a lot of tuning—in just how he hit the drum. If it was "Knock On Wood," it sounded like that old deep snare. When we did the English stuff, it had that kind of high-pitched crack. I realized then that a lot of that is how you hit a drum. You get into that mindset, being in the studio so many years, that you need



Michael McDonald



Tony Bennett

different drums for different sounds. But then you realize there are some guys out there who can pretty much duplicate all those records with one drum.

Tony Bennett

RF: You've worked with a list of prestigious drummers. Would you name some of them?

TB: Let's start at the top. Gene Krupa, Buddy Rich, Louie Bellson, Art Blakey, Jo Jones, Candido, Joe Cocuzzo, Sol Gubin, and my current drummer, Joe LaBarbera.

I made a famous transition in my life through Ralph Sharon, my musical director. Back in the '50s, when I started, I had a string of hits that were very sweet, with string backgrounds. So when the record company saw that there was immediate reaction, they said, "Just keep recording like that. We don't want you to change." But Ralph knew that would be the death of me. He knew I had a very strong jazz influence, so he kept nudging me and saying, "You've got to make a jazz record. There's a big audience out there who would dig the way you sing." He was a very innovative arranger, and he changed my career for the better. He came up with the idea of using all different drummers for an album I had called *Beat Of My Heart*, on Columbia Records. We had great drummers on it, including Art Blakey, Jo Jones, and Chico Hamilton. Chico did a spectacular thing on "Lazy Afternoon." What he did with the cymbals was completely impressionistic. It was out of tempo, actually, a *rubato* thing that was very creative. The whole album had one great drummer after another. That created a whole opening for me with the jazz audience that I never had.

RF: When did you work with Gene Krupa?

TB: We did something for the National Guard. It was a radio show, but somebody bootlegged an album. It's a wonderful recording, though.

RF: Working with a Gene Krupa, a Buddy Rich, or a Louie Bellson...

TB: Louie is my favorite. He's closer than a brother to me. He's a great artist. He's almost a Renaissance man. He writes poetry, he writes music, he's an orchestrator. With him, it's not just keeping

time. He's very knowledgeable and very intellectual. I also love the fact that he helps young people all the time.

RF: What is it about his playing that you like?

TB: There are certain drummers, like Buddy Rich, Louie Bellson, and Sol Gubin, who do what I call American-style drumming. There is a definite American style, although it's been kind of sublimated with all the British music that took over during the past twenty-five years. But there's a tremendous jazz style—and once again, it's just based on sheer talent. They just know how to play. There are just a handful of guys who really know how to keep a certain time where you really feel like you're on stage and right in the heat of it and it's happening.

Joe LaBarbera, who has been with me for about twelve years now, is one of the most intelligent drummers I've worked with. I remember Bill Evans, the great piano player, used to be completely unhappy because he couldn't find the right drummer. When he ran

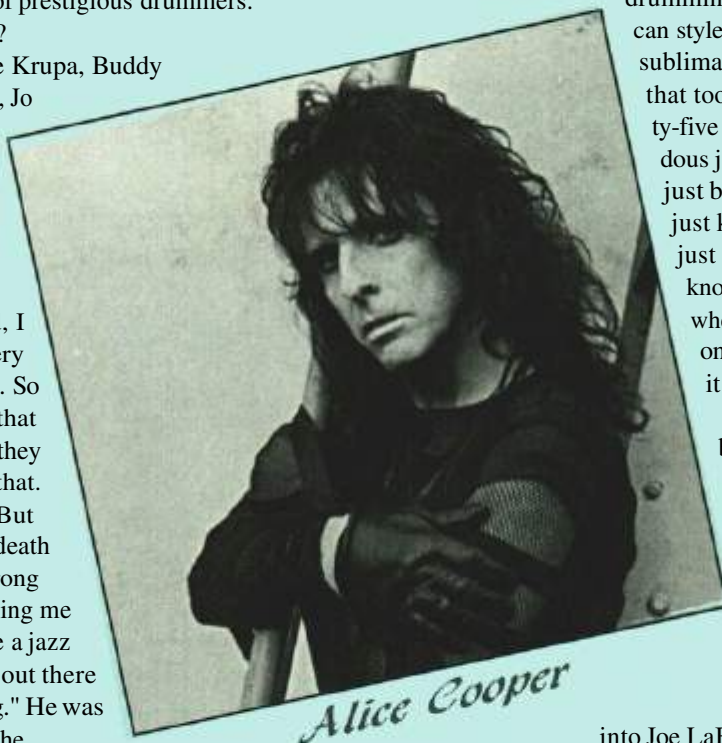
into Joe LaBarbera, that was it. I know

why. I've never met a more sane and intelligent drummer in my life.

RF: What I'm trying to pinpoint is, when you sing, what is it you need? Do you need somebody who makes the band swing, somebody who listens to your

vocals, somebody who is a chops player? What do you need?

TB: I just like someone who is very creative, who concentrates, and who feels the importance of the moment and makes something happen. There are "givers" and "takers," and the ones who are givers are magnificent accompanists. I think it's a very honorable and noble kind of person who can step out of themselves and say, "Let me help this guy out." I like that kind of human being. And they make the performance come alive.



Alice Cooper



Ozzy Osbourne

Alice Cooper

RF: I'd like to find out what you look for in a drummer in the studio and

live.

AC: I like a stage drummer to not necessarily be as precise as a studio drummer, because I think live things have to breathe a little more. You can get so intricate in the studio that it gets stiff. I've listened to things and thought, "This is too perfect. I want to hear some life in the drums." On the last album I used Mickey Curry, who I consider one of the greatest in the world.

RF: What is it you like about him?

AC: For one thing, he's a frustrated comedian. He had us laughing so hard. He knew every bit of everything from Spinal Tap to Jerry Lewis, so he was really a pleasure to work with. *Plus*, he would get everything in one take! He's a walking metronome.

Eric Singer, who worked with me on my last tour, is just one of those guys who could beat the drums all day and never get tired. I don't understand where his energy comes from.

RF: So live, energy is really important to you.

AC: Yes, I think I was spoiled by Neil Smith, the guy who was in the original Alice Cooper Band. He was all energy and all arms and legs—he was 6' 5" and wore 5" heels! Neil would find out how many drums Keith Moon had and then he'd get one more. One time Keith and Neil played on stage at the East Town in Detroit. It was the ultimate wall of drums.

RF: Who else have you worked with through the years?

AC: I've worked with a lot of different guys. I've worked with Whitie Glann from Canada, who was in the band during the *Welcome To My Nightmare* period. I've worked with Bobby Chouinard on record. I worked with Jim Gordon, who played on the *Alice Cooper Goes To Hell* album. Allan Schwartzberg also played on that album. Jonathan Mover worked with me for a while. There are about five or six more drummers, although I can't remember all of them.

RF: When you hire somebody for a record, probably the producer has more to do with that than you.

AC: That's something you really have to work with your producer on. You have to sit down and decide what sound you really want. There are lots of different styles, and if you're going to make a solid record, you want somebody like Mickey Curry. I believe in using a studio band and a stage band for two different reasons. I think you're giving the audience the best of both worlds. If you're doing an album, you

use the best studio guys who are real rockers, and when you get on stage, you use guys who look great and play great. Most of the time, if you get a great studio drummer, you can't pay him enough to go on the road with you, because he makes so much money in the studio.

RF: You said that energy is one of the most important live elements to you. What else do you want them to be aware of? Your vocals? Are there theatrical cues as well?

AC: Absolutely. In our show, the bass and drums have to be glued together. A lot of theatrical cues come off the drums,

so they have to be very aware of all parts of the show. We rehearse the music for a tour for three or four weeks so that it's instant recall. From that, we take it to a big soundstage to rehearse theatrics, blocking, lighting, and what's going to happen within that music.

RF: You probably don't really need a chops player. You probably want a more balls-to-the-wall kind of player.

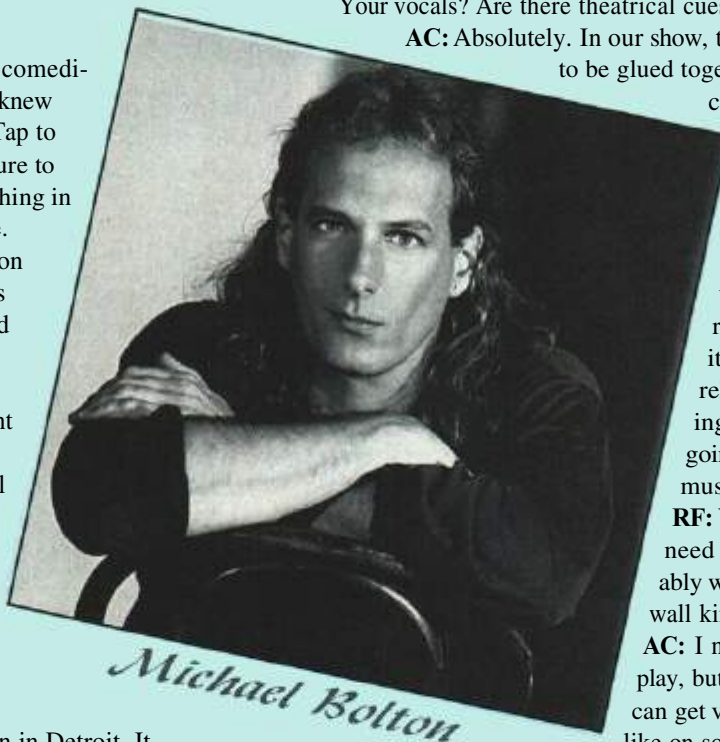
AC: I need a guy who can really play, but I also need a guy who can get very intricate sometimes, like on some of the *Welcome To My Nightmare* stuff. He almost has to be a percussionist because there are lots of subtle things that have to happen. I have to get that out of all the players.

I still say, to this day, Keith Moon was the very best. He was one of my best friends, and he was really the spirit of rock 'n' roll to me.

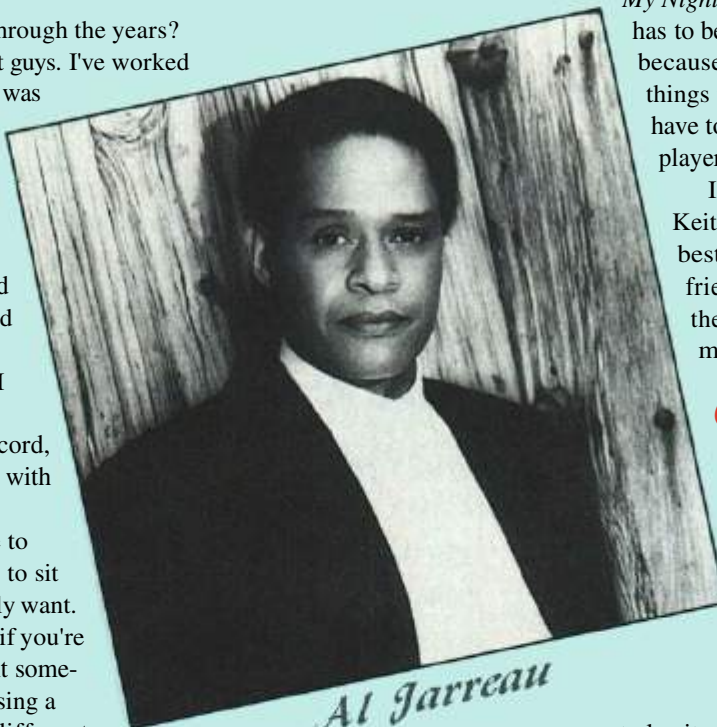
Ozzy Osbourne

OO: On this new record I've made, Randy Castillo's drumming is incredible. And the drum sound he's got is amazing. I find that the other drummers I've had in the

past play it safe. They've got tricks that they've been doing for years, and they're afraid to venture further.



Michael Bolton



Al Jarreau

continued on page 94

MD's '92 Reader

HONOR ROLL

MD's Honor Roll consists of those drummers whose talent, musical achievements, and lasting popularity placed them first in *MD's* Readers Poll in the categories indicated for five or more years. We will include these artists, along with those added in the future, in each year's Readers Poll Results as our way of honoring these very special performers.

ALEXACUNA

Latin/Brazilian Percussionist

AIRTO

Latin American and Latin/
Brazilian Percussionist

GARY BURTON

Mallet Percussionist

ANTHONY J. CIRONE

Classical Percussionist

PHIL COLLINS

Pop/Mainstream Rock Drummer

VIC FIRTH

Classical Percussionist

STEVE GADD

All-Around Drummer; Studio Drummer

DAVID GARIBALDI

R&B/Funk Drummer

LARRIE LONDIN

Country Drummer

ROD MORGENSTEIN

Rock/Progressive Rock Drummer

NEIL PEART

Rock Drummer; Multi-Percussionist

BUDDY RICH

Big Band Drummer

EDSHAUGHNESSY

Big Band Drummer

STEVE SMITH

Ail-Around Drummer

DAVE WECKL

Electric Jazz Drummer

TONY WILLIAMS

Jazz/Mainstream Jazz Drummer



HALL OF FAME

1992: MAX ROACH

1991: Art Blakey

1990: Bill Bruford

1989: Carl Palmer

1988: Joe Morello

1987: Billy Cobham

1986: Tony Williams

1985: Louie Bellson

1984: Steve Gadd

1983: Neil Peart

1982: Keith Moon

1981: John Bonham

1980: Buddy Rich

1979: Gene Krupa

rs Poll Results

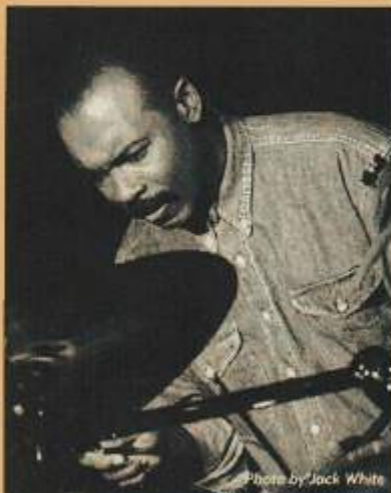
ALL-AROUND



VINNIE COLAIUTA

2. Anton Fig
3. Kenny Aronoff
4. Rod Morgenstein
5. Dave Weckl

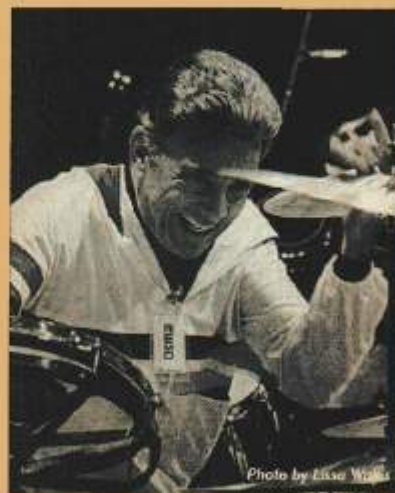
STUDIO



HARVEY MASON

2. Kenny Aronoff
3. Jeff Porcaro
4. Jim Keltner/Simon Phillips

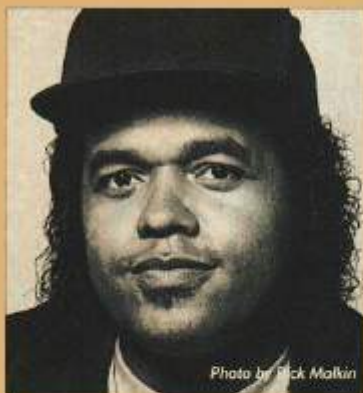
BIG BAND



LOUIE BELLSON

2. Butch Miles
3. Shannon Powell
4. Steve Houghton
5. Terry Clarke/Danny Gottlieb

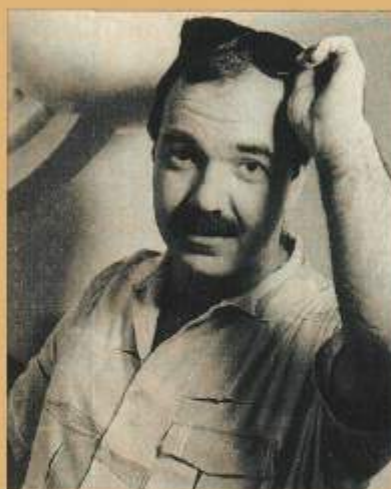
ELECTRIC JAZZ



DENNIS CHAMBERS

2. Bill Bruford
3. Steve Smith
4. William Kennedy
5. Harvey Mason

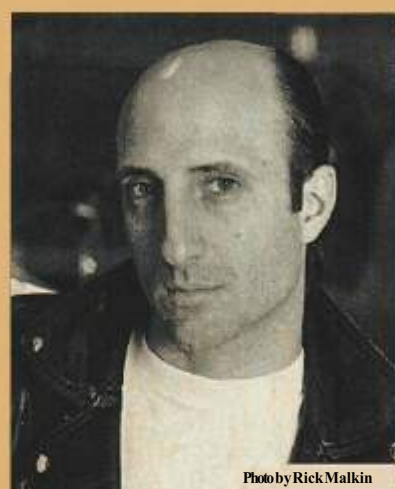
MAINSTREAM JAZZ



PETER ERSKINE

2. Jack DeJohnette
3. Jeff Watts
4. Marvin "Smitty" Smith
5. William Kennedy/Dave Weckl

POP/MAIN-STREAM ROCK



KENNY ARONOFF

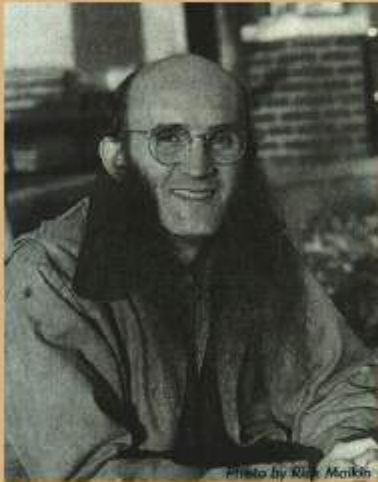
2. Chester Thompson
3. Jonathan Moffett
4. Manu Katche
5. Blas Elias

FUNK

DENNIS CHAMBERS

2. Chuck Morris
3. William Calhoun
4. Chad Smith
5. Omar Hakim

COUNTRY



FRED YOUNG

2. Mark Herndon
3. Milton Sledge
4. Cactus Moser
5. Eddie Bayers/
Jack Gavin/John Stacey

HARD ROCK/METAL



LARS ULRICH

2. Alex Van Halen
3. Scott Rockenfield
4. Tommy Lee
5. Tommy Aldridge/
Dave Lombardo

PROGRESSIVE ROCK



WILLIAM CALHOUN

2. Terry Bozzio
3. Scott Rockenfield
4. Bill Bruford
5. Jonathan Mover

UP & COMING



TIM "HERB" ALEXANDER (Primus) and DAVE GROHL (Nirvana)

3. Matt Cameron (Soundgarden)
4. Matt Sorum (Guns N' Roses)
5. Paul Geary (Extreme)/
Bill Stewart (John Scofield)

LATIN/BRAZILIAN PERCUSSION



TITO PUENTE

2. Luis Conte
3. Manolo Badrena/Rafael Padilla
5. Don Alias/Paulinho da Costa

RECORDED PERFORMANCE



NEIL PEART

- Rush: *Roll The Bones*
2. Alex Van Halen—Van Halen:
*For Unlawful
Carnal Knowledge*
3. Lars Ulrich—Metallica:
Metallica
4. Dave Weckl—Chick Corea
Elektric Band: *Beneath
The Mask*
5. Matt Sorum—Guns N' Roses:
Use Your Illusion I & II

In order to present the results of our Readers Poll, the votes were tabulated and the top five names in each category listed here.

In the event a tie occurred at any position other than fifth place, all names in that position were presented and the subsequent position eliminated. When a tie occurred at fifth place, all winning names were presented.

EDITORS' ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

This award is given by the editors of *Modern Drummer* in recognition of outstanding contribution to the drum/percussion community by a performer, author, educator, manufacturer, etc. The persons so honored may be notable figures in drumming history or active participants in today's drumming scene. The criteria for this award shall be the value of the contribution(s) made by the honorees, in terms of influences on subsequent musical styles, educational methods, product designs, etc. There will be no limit as to the number of honorees that may be designated each year. For 1992, *MD's* editors are pleased to honor:



CHICK WEBB

Within the tragically brief span of his career (1924-1939), Chick Webb set the standard for big band drummers while establishing himself as one of the most acclaimed figures in jazz. A man whose spirit, courage, and determination were unsurpassed, the diminutive and partially crippled Webb propelled his band

with energy and flair—helping to make it one of the preeminent groups of the swing era. Displaying a combination of musical taste, perfect time, and infectious drive, Chick Webb set the stage on which drummers like Gene Krupa and Buddy Rich would follow.



EARL PALMER

Earl Palmer played drums on countless hits in the '60s and '70s, from Little Richard to Frank Sinatra, and from Motown to the California surf sound. When added to his television and film work, Earl's credits unquestionably place him in the elite group of most-recorded

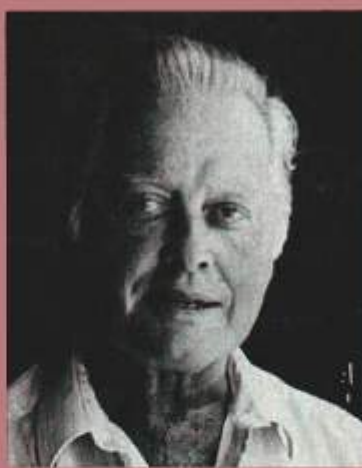
drummers of all time. And as a long-time officer of Los Angeles's Local 47 of the American Federation of Musicians, Earl has worked diligently to protect the interests of drummers—and all musicians—in that city's burgeoning music industry.



BOBBY CHRISTIAN

As a combination player, educator, and motivator, Bobby Christian had no peer. From his early days as a drummer with Sophie Tucker and Paul Whiteman, through his career as a radio and television percussionist for both NBC and CBS, Bobby developed the "tricks" that made him unique. In his

later years, he shared those tricks enthusiastically as a clinician—inspiring two generations of drummers and percussionists, and firmly establishing his reputation as "Mr. Percussion."



JIM CHAPIN

If Jim Chapin had only written his classic *Advanced Techniques For The Modern Drummer* and then retired, his place in drumming history would be secure. The book revolutionized the study of the drumset and became the "standard text" for contemporary drumming. But Jim did not retire.

Instead, he has remained active as an educator and clinician, always eager to share his knowledge and skills with drummers around the world.

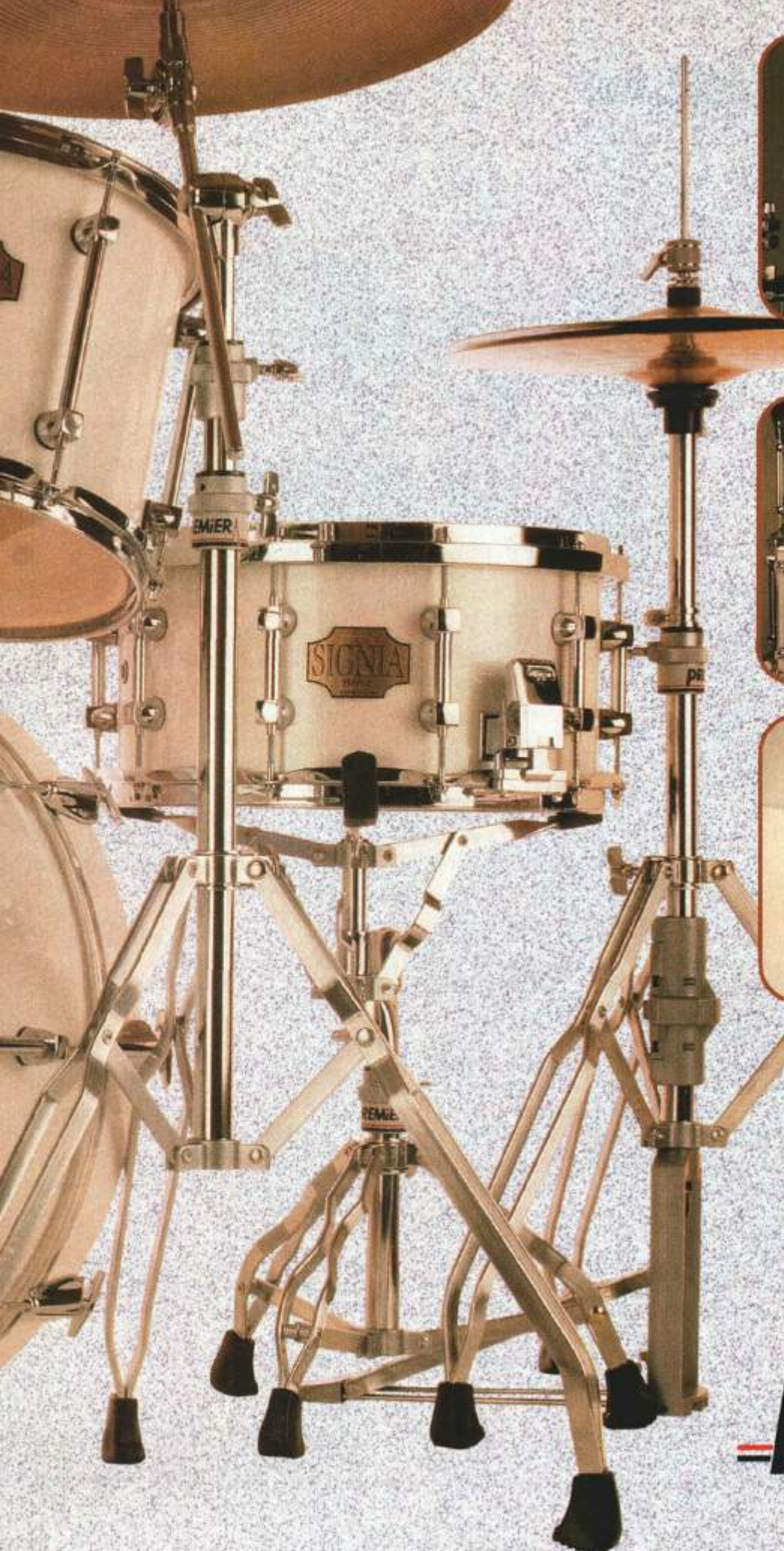


SIGNIA

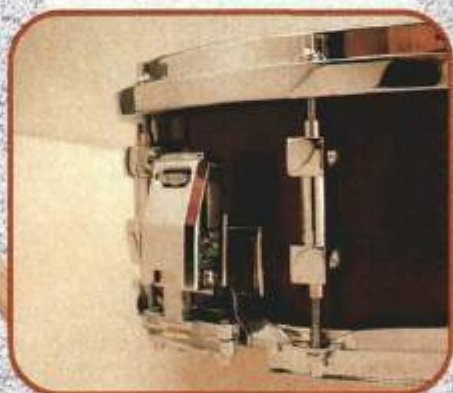
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Montgomery Snare Drum

■ by Rick Mattingly

This drum offers subtle, yet ingenious, new design elements.

In the past few years, we've seen an explosion of new snare drums in all kinds of diameters and depths. You've also got quite a choice when it comes to shell construction, with numerous metals and woods to select from. Manufacturers have experimented with lug design, rim design, and the snares themselves. Surely by now we've seen just about everything—right? Don't bet on it. Garry Montgomery, for one, has decided to rethink a couple of the features we take for granted, such as the air vents and snare strainer.

Vari-Vents

In case you haven't thought about it lately, there is air between the top and bottom heads of your drums. When you strike the top head, it is momentarily pushed downward, causing the air underneath it to also move down. That's what causes the bottom head to vibrate, thus activating the snares.

The reason most drums have an air vent is to let a little bit of that air escape from the side of the drum, because if you were to strike the drum hard, with all of the air trapped inside, the top head would not be as free to move. The resulting sound would be "choked." Sometimes, even on a drum *with* an air vent, extremely loud playing can result in that same choked effect.

One solution, of course, is to add more air vents. Certain snare drums designed for marching have taken that approach to the point of having a large gap in the shell. The more air that can escape, the less



chance of the drum sounding choked—and the less sensitive the drum is at *low* volume. When you are playing very, very softly on the top head, you're not moving the air very much to begin with, and if you want the snares to respond (like when you're playing a soft buzz roll), you don't want a lot of air escaping from the side of the drum.

To deal with both of these situations, Garry Montgomery has developed adjustable air vents, which he calls *Vari-Vents*. The drum we received had two of them, mounted on opposite sides of the drum. Each vent has a threaded "plug." The plug itself has a very small hole running through it, and when the plug is screwed in against the shell, the air can only escape through those holes.

When the plug is rotated to the "out" position, a larger hole drilled vertically through the plug is revealed. That hole, which bisects the small, horizontal hole, is covered up when the plug is against the shell, but allows additional air to escape when the plug is screwed out.

Having two *Vari-Vents* on the drum gives you three basic options: both plugs in, both plugs out, or one in and one out. According to the manufacturer, both plugs in is good for soft, acoustic jazz, both plugs out is for heavy rock, and the one

in/one out combination is for orchestral or big band. Three drums in one just by altering the air vent!

Okay, maybe that's going a bit far. The effect is very subtle, but there is a difference. The drum was a little more responsive at extreme low volumes with both plugs in, was less prone to choke with both plugs out, and was somewhere in between with one in and the other out. One thing that definitely affected the results, however, was the position the snares were in, which brings us to our next topic.

Snare Tension Presets

Everything on a snare drum is affected by everything else on a snare drum, so it's hard to isolate one aspect of the drum's construction and make blanket statements about it. For example, consider the snares. If they are too tight, I don't care how many air vents you drill in your shell, the drum is still going to sound choked, because the snares won't be able to respond to the force of the stroke. By the same token, if the snares are too loose, they are not going to be responsive at low volumes even if you have no air vents at all.

So, Garry Montgomery has also designed a sort of toggle control to give you three consistent settings for your

snare tension. You set the control by positioning the toggle, or lever, in its center position, and then setting the snares to a medium tensioning. Once you've done that, all you have to do is either turn the lever towards you to make the snares a little looser, or turn it away from you to make them tighter. (That's with the drum set up so that the strainer is at the 9:00 position.) This feature in no way interferes with the throw-off mechanism, which will completely release the snares in the usual way.

The differences in the three settings are not extreme, but they are obvious. Everyone is going to have a different opinion as to what constitutes "tight" and "loose," and a lot of that will depend on how you set the middle setting. I was satisfied that the snares did, in fact, sound tight, medium, and loose.

Interestingly, once I started manipulating the snare tension, the vent positions had more effect. In general, tight snares with both plugs in gave the best response for soft playing; loose snares with both plugs out avoided a choked sound for very loud playing. For general playing, medium snares with one plug in and the other out struck a happy balance.

Overall I was impressed by these two features. Granted, you've always had the

ability to adjust your snare tension however you wanted it, but if you happen to be one who is constantly altering the tension between songs (because you want a different effect, not because the strainer is slipping), you might appreciate the convenience of Montgomery's three-position lever. And being able to adjust the vents tends to enhance the effect somewhat.

The Drum Itself

Montgomery makes the drums that come equipped with the above devices himself. The one we received is the "budget" version, with a six-ply American maple shell and "off-shore" hardware. The drum also came fitted with an internal muffler, which had an extra adjustment of its own. It had the traditional round knob, with which you could set the amount of tightness against the top head. But around the main tensioning knob was a large "quick-release" collar. By using that, you could engage or disengage the muffler with a single quick turn. The finish was basic, but attractive. The drum sells for \$395.

Montgomery also makes more expensive versions, with better grade hardware (often Premier), eight-ply shells, and various choices of diameter, depth, and hoops (die-cast or flanged). Different finishes

are also available. Montgomery's most expensive model lists at \$595.

One feature of Montgomery's shells that he is especially proud of is his snare beds, which he will cut shallow, medium, or deep. He says that the effectiveness of his preset snare tensioning device is dependent on the snares laying across the head evenly, so that they are not pulling at some point. With that in mind, he takes extra care when cutting the beds.

If you are interested in installing Montgomery's *Van-Vents* or Preset Snare Tensioning system on your own drum, he will sell the parts individually—or you can send him your drum and he'll do the work for you (for a small fee, of course). In regards to the snare tensioning unit, you might be able to adapt the one you have, which will cost you about \$30, or you might have to buy the whole unit, which costs \$45. *Van-Vent* plugs are also available, but at the time this review was being written, Garry was looking into a better grade of metal, so a price was not available (although he estimated that they would be about \$25 each). He will also re-cut your snare bed for \$25. You can contact Garry Montgomery at HCR2 Box 2024 #8, Branson, MO 65616.

A.D.M., Snare Drums

7 x 12 She-Oak Block

Australia, with its unique indigenous wood types, is becoming an important region for snare drum production. A.D.M. (Australian Drum Manufacturing) is taking full advantage of this fact to produce some good-quality solid-shell snare drums. One of their more unusual drums is a 7x12 she-oak block model. This size is a little out of the ordinary for a snare drum, but the dimensions give this drum some qualities all its own.

Before we get into sound, though, let's



cover features. As previously mentioned, the drum is of a solid-shell block con-

struction, the shell being 1/2" thick. This, along with some rather hefty hoops and

lugs, makes the drum surprisingly heavy for its size. The snare strainer is an efficient, smooth-operating device. A nice feature about the strainer is that you can adjust snare tension from either side of the drum (although the throw-off lever is only on one side). The drum comes equipped with Remo *Ambassador* heads top and bottom. The appearance of the drum was greatly enhanced by a dark, very *natural* wood finish.

This drum is a very sensitive instrument. The snares were very responsive, making rolling easy. As you might expect, the drum had a high-pitched, piccolo-like "crack," no matter how it was tensioned—yet the sound was bigger than that of a normal piccolo drum. And the rimshot sound was loud (with the kind of tone you only get from a wood-shell drum). One drawback of the drum's 12" diameter is that achieving a good rim-click sound was a little difficult, though not impossible.

I found that the drum worked best with a medium tensioning, because tuned down it sounded a bit "tanky," and tuned high it was *way* too thin and almost choked. The medium tuning brought out the unique "wood" sound of the drum, and the crack was still cutting. If you enjoy a piccolo sound, but are looking for something that covers a broader spectrum of frequencies, this could be the drum for you. List price is \$748.

• William F. Miller

5 1/2 x 15 and 6 1/2 x 14 Jarrah Block

A.D.M. also offers two, more traditionally sized snare drums: their 5 1/2"- and 6 1/2"-deep, 14"-diameter jarrah block models. Design-wise, these drums are similar to the 7x12 she-oak drum reviewed above: tubular, low-mass lugs, flanged hoops, block construction, 20-strand steel snares (16-strand on the 7x12), and the same snare mechanism. This mechanism, by the way, flips down *away from* the drumshell, unlike other designs that move parallel to the drum's profile. This isn't necessarily a problem, just something to be aware of for drummers who position their snare lever either close to themselves or their set.

One potentially problematic design aspect on both these drums is that the lug bolts enter their receivers at a slight angle. This seems to cause a significant amount of friction—apparently not enough to cause any stripping of threads, but definitely enough to make pressure-tuning an impossibility. This is annoying mostly because it would seem to be a pretty simple problem to alleviate, perhaps by just putting thicker spacers between the drumshell and the lugs.

On the visual side, our 5 1/2" drum was painted a deep, striking black and buffed to a bright shine. Through the clear bottom head, though, you can see the shell makeup: a series of approximately 1 1/2" wide jarrah "slats" vertically bonded and cut with precise 45° bearing edges. The 6 1/2" drum is the same design, except that its shell's exterior is left in a "natu-

ral" finish. Like A.D.M.'s she-oak drum, the jarrah shells are about 1/2" thick. Jarrah, though, seems to be a lighter wood, so these two drums aren't overly heavy, despite their thick shells.

Once tuned within their optimum ranges, both these drums sounded quite nice. The 5 1/2" model sounded particularly good tuned medium to high; the 6 1/2" drum sounded best medium to medium-high. Tuned too low, the 6 1/2" seemed to lose some character, and tuned too high, it choked. Within their ideal ranges, though, both drums had a nice, cracking (though somewhat controlled) sound—when played right in the middle of the head. When playing them even slightly off-center, though, I began to get some very noticeable ringing. If you're the kind of drummer who likes a drum with a variety of ring sounds, you might find this quality engaging. If you've got a problem aiming, though, beware: In a studio situation, these drums could be unforgiving of inconsistency (unless, of course, you luck out and get an engineer/producer who makes records that actually sound like *humans* are playing on them).

Both drums were very sensitive, so playing with dynamics was a lot of fun. With the bottom head tuned pretty tight and some slightly loose snares, the lightest of rolls sounded. Yet both drums also spoke out quite loudly when played with rimshots on- or off-center. Overall, though, the 5 1/2" model was more versatile and had more personality.

The A.D.M. 5 1/2 x 14 jarrah block model retails at \$780; the 6 1/2 x 14 is priced at \$745. A.D.M. is just getting its distribution network set up. In the northeastern U.S., call Sam Ash Music at (800) 472-6274. (Thanks to Terry Bissette of the Edison, NJ store for his help in providing the drums for this review.) In the southern U.S., call Michael Briggs at (713) 495-5699. In Canada, contact Power Percussion at (416) 250-6345. Elsewhere contact A.D.M. directly at Postal 7, McQuarie Ave., Padbury, Western Australia 6025, Phone 61 9 401 2849.

• Adam J. Budofsky



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Mike Baker, Peter Erskine, Tom Brechtlein,
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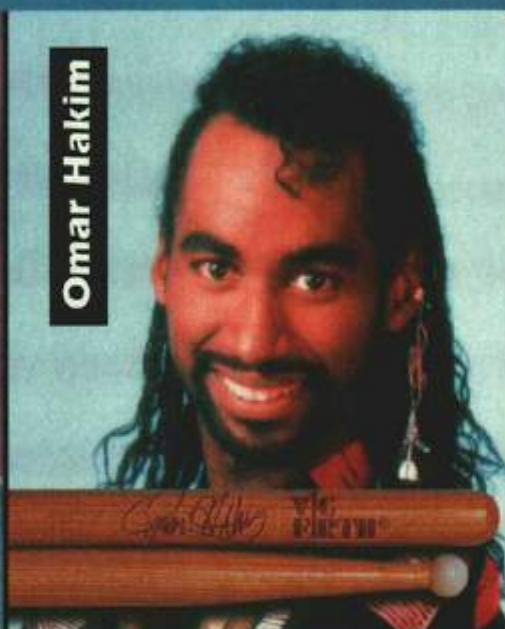
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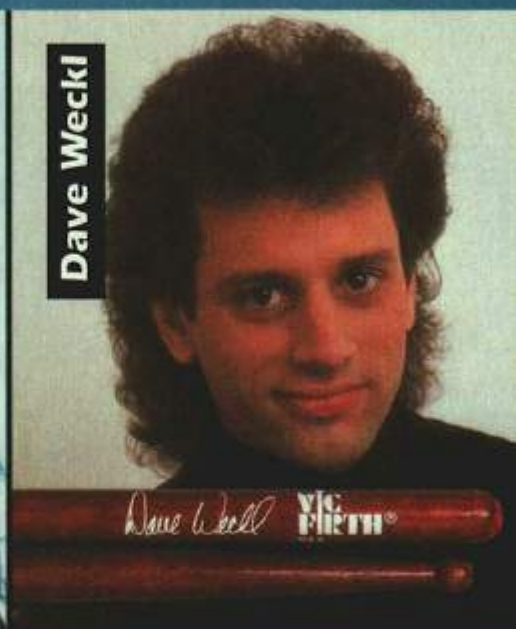
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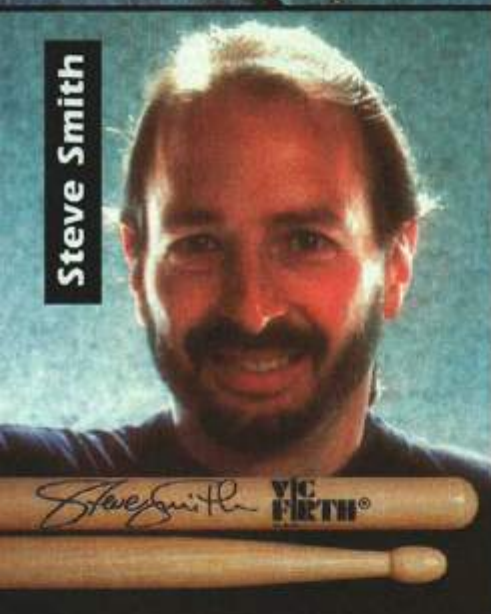
Omar Hakim



Dave Weckl



Steve Smith



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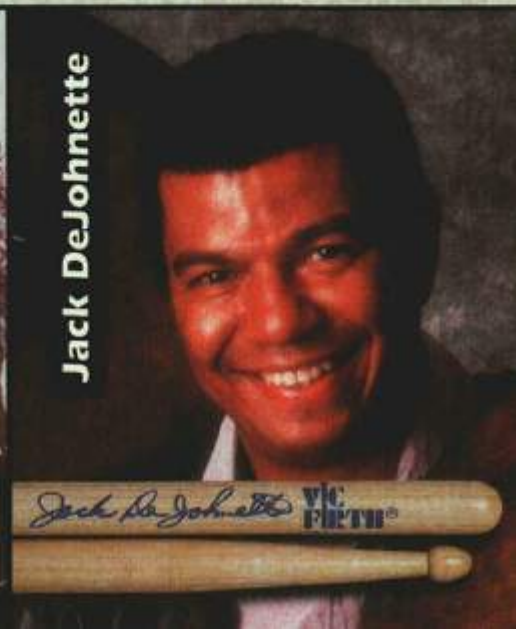
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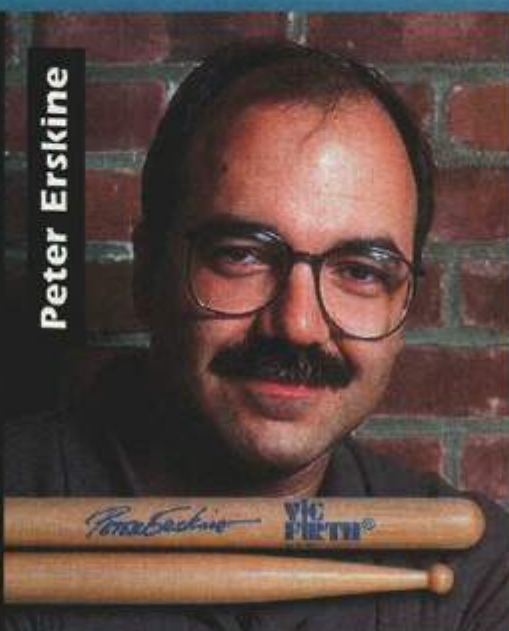


Perfection

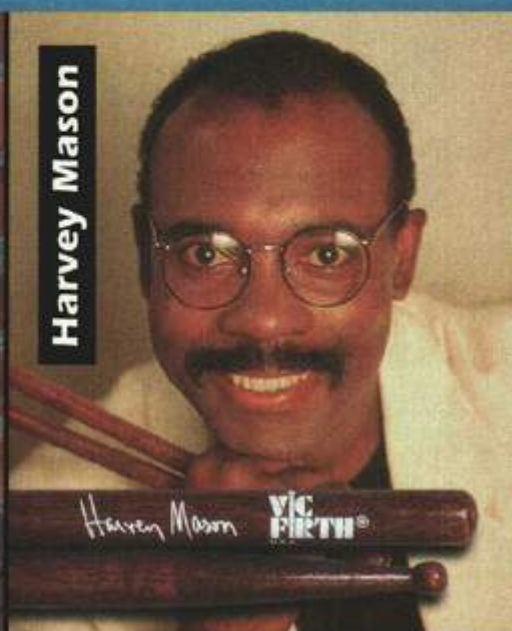
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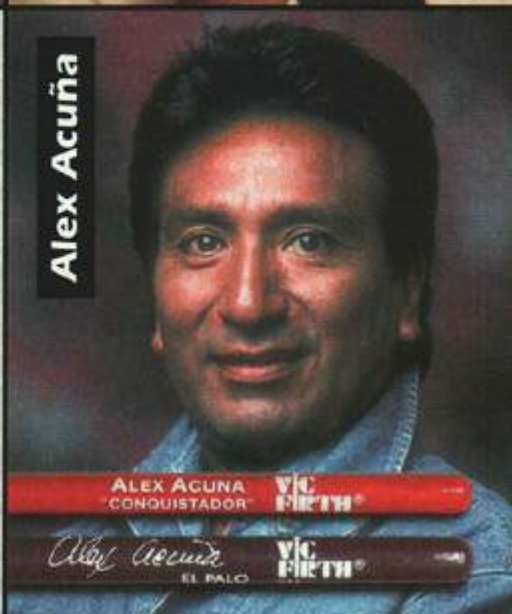


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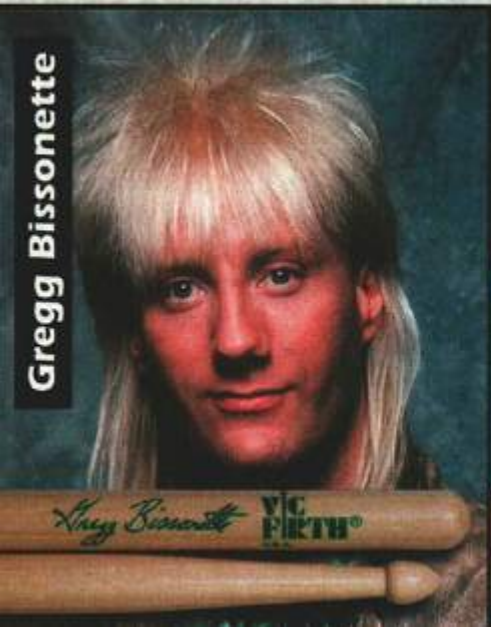
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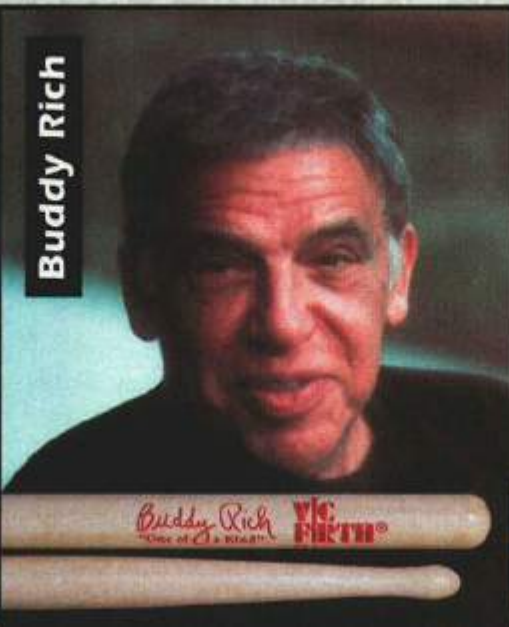
Alex Acuña



Gregg Bissonette



Buddy Rich



Rod Morgenstein



Boom Theory Spacemuffins

■ by Richard Watson

If it looks like a drum, feels like a drum, and plays like a drum, then it must be a...trigger pad?

Just when you thought you'd seen electronic drumpads in every conceivable shape and kind, along comes a design you may not expect from the world of electronic percussion: pads that look like *drums*! Combining the form of acoustics with the function of electronic drums, Boom Theory presents their new trigger pads, *Spacemuffins*.

Basics

In the techno-alien world of electronic trigger design, no pad is less "spacey" than *Spacemuffins*. With maple shells, chrome-plated tension casings, and Remo plastic heads, they have more in common with your first trusty five-piece than anything with outputs. The basic *Muffin* kit includes a 10x22 kick, a 5 1/2 x 12 snare, and three 5 1/2 x 12 toms—each fitted with piezo transducers in patented baffle systems and accessed via standard 1/4" phone jacks. The snare has an additional trigger and output for the rim. The toms come equipped with mounts that fit standard 1/2" L-brackets and tighten with a drumkey. The kick is fitted with a pair of Pearl-type swivel spurs.

The Player/Pad Interface

Spacemuffins' design addresses several nagging ergonomic differences between acoustics and electronics. Most

electronic drum pads simulate the feel of a tightly-tuned acoustic drum head, erring toward an unnaturally "live" and rubbery response. Especially for heavy hitters, half the primal fun of drumming is lost when that little piece of gum rubber defies our domination with an infinitesimal retreat and a near one-to-one energy return—and in the bargain gives us tennis elbow.

Not so with *Spacemuffins*. The layer of foam and the maple sound board beneath the batter head generates a moderate stick/beater response that more closely approximates a loosely tuned head than any pad I've played. The feel of the kick in particular is virtually indistinguishable from that of an acoustic bass drum. Playing harder causes *Muffin* heads to both yield and rebound proportionally more, with no perceptible hard limit at the bottom of the stroke. The overall effect is a gratifying reward-for-exertion sensation that acoustic drummers take for granted and most electronic drummers, until now, could only yearn for.

The feel of *Spacemuffins* is made even more authentic by their metal rims. Beating a rimless rubber pad fails to provide the tactile messages—the rim's initial bite into the stick and its solid resistance—that distinguish violent or intense strokes from the more delicate ones often played on the drumhead alone. Lost too are metal rims' sonic message, which is not, as might be imagined, irrelevant to electronic drummers. I found that the audible "pop" of rimshots on the snare and tom pads helped to focus and orient my playing by linking the location that my brain said *should* produce the sound—the playing surface—with the one that *did* produce the sound—the speaker or headphones. Hats off to Boom Theory for further narrowing the authenticity gap between acoustics and electronics.

Another asset to *Spacemuffins'* playability is the size of their batter heads. Hitting the smaller surface area of some pads, especially those on integrated multi-pad units, requires an awareness

of target location that some drummers find distracting from the more autonomous elements of playing (such as groove, time, creativity, or hair-flailing for MTV). The 12" diameter of the snare and tom pads is large enough for motor-memory targeting, and facilitates a setup and limb stretch that is familiar to acoustic drummers.

With the advantages of a larger "drum," though, come obvious disadvantages. *Spacemuffins* will occupy almost as much stage space, drum for drum, as acoustic drums would, and won't tuck into the nooks and crannies of an existing kit as conveniently as smaller pads would. They are therefore less practical than smaller pads and integrated-pad sets for vast and varied incidental percussion applications—for which compactness and sends-per-inch density are more critical than a familiar configuration. Consider also that your *Muffins* will also occupy more space in the back of your Buick, and that they weigh nearly as much as acoustic drums.

The Pad/Brain Interface

Spacemuffins creator Al Adinolfi exhorts no less than three times in the four-page user's manual "the importance of knowing your interface." His warnings are justified. Due to cylinder acoustics, critical surface area, and some other things I won't pretend to understand, some very big names in musical instrument manufacturing told Al years ago that his idea wouldn't work. He has clearly proven them wrong. But perhaps for the same reasons they doubted him, *Spacemuffins* are not your basic "unpack, plug in, and play" item off the shelf. Taming them takes time. The main difficulty lies in achieving sensitivity without false triggering.

I first tested *Spacemuffins* with Alexis's new and improved *D4*, which worked surprisingly well. (The first generation *D4*, I was warned, would have gobs of trouble reading *Spacemuffins'* signal.) I had to raise the *D4's* gain to between 65 and 70 for my lightest strokes to trigger. This compressed the

dynamic range a little, but not unbearably. Based upon later tests with other brains, I attributed the occasional priority note dropout on press rolls to the *D4* rather than to the *Spacemuffin*. My *drumKAT* was initially confused by the *Spacemuffins* signal. (Okay, I was confused.) Its sensitivity was fair, and its signal level diminished a bit from the center to the edge of the head quite naturally. But when I raised the *drumKAT*'s gain sufficiently to register my lightest hits, heavier ones double-triggered, and when I raised the threshold setting, pianissimo hits disappeared again. Oddly, I could eliminate some of the double-triggering by dampening the bottom head with my hand, which suggests that at least part of the problem is due to sonic reflection—a pothole not usually encountered with electronics. Neither tightening nor loosening the heads helped. But by raising the headroom and further tweaking gain and threshold, I discovered that a broad, smooth dynamic range had been hiding there all along!

I had less success with the snare drum's separate rim trigger. On its own, the rim responded splendidly. As before, after adjusting the *KAT*'s interaction suppression, threshold, and gain settings, I was able to isolate it sufficiently so that only my hardest hits on the head triggered the rim as well. But nothing I could do prevented the head from triggering when I really whacked the rim. Complementary samples, such as snare and cross-stick, snare and rimshot, and even muted conga and conga slap sounded fine. Contextually disparate ones like timpani and tambourine didn't fare as well. Especially frustrating were my attempts to access inherently quieter or staccato samples from the rim without the intrusion of louder or legato ones assigned to the head.

This shouldn't be too surprising. A *Spacemuffin* is, after all, a *drum*, whose rim is in physical contact with its head. But because of it, think of the rim as an integral part of the instrument that enhances its realistic duplication of an



acoustic drum's characteristics, not as a discrete "bonus" trigger for that once-per-song bell tree or water gong sample. In fairness I should state that when I spoke to Al Adinolfi about this problem, he told me that he was aware of it and had already made improvements to eliminate it.

Al passionately advocates using direct-input (as opposed to MIDI-interface) sound sources. And so, to provide ideal test conditions, I also ran the *Muffins* through a *ddrum 2*. The difference wasn't dramatic, but I did detect an immediacy in their response and slightly superior tracking of quiet strokes preceded by loud ones. Trading away the magic of MIDI for this modest refinement wouldn't serve my personal musi-

cal priorities, but if you want to hear *Spacemuffins* at their very best, you might want to test-drive them with a direct-input system.

One of the more up-front guys I've ever met, Al admits that *Muffins* may be false-triggered by the crack of an acoustic snare drum rimshot, as may the kick drum by stage volumes exceeding 90 decibels. He continues to work on a solution. With prolonged exposure to 90 decibels, I, for one, wouldn't be able to hear the drums for all the blood spurting from my ears, so this wouldn't be much of an issue to me. But if you plan to incorporate *Spacemuffins* into your acoustic kit, or if you play in situations of consistently high stage or rehearsal volume, try to test them under similar con-

ditions. Likewise, since adjustability of triggering parameters may be required to dial in a worthy performance from *Spacemuffins*, I strongly recommend testing them carefully with the interface you plan to use—especially any not mentioned in this review—before making a purchase.

Boom Theory could alleviate some of the mystery of fine tuning the pads by adding a page to the owner's manual that recommends settings for the most popular interfaces to match *Spacemuffins'* triggering characteristics. Optimal settings will, of course, vary with drummers' individual playing styles, but knowing where to start and how to troubleshoot common problems could spare the buyer a lot of anxiety and many phone calls back to the music store.

Durability

The set I examined was a demo that had logged many hours of playing and 16,000 airline miles. We're talkin' road-worthy. The bearing edge I checked was true and smooth, and all the hardware fit

precisely. *Spacemuffins* are heftier than any pads I know of and seem to be solidly constructed. The only exception I noticed was that the Mylar covering on the bass drum wasn't properly glued down, allowing it to bulge away slightly from the curve of the shell. To be honest, the chrome finish highlighted the flaw by distorting reflected images like a fun house mirror; had the kit had any other finish, I'd never have noticed. When I mentioned the problem to Al Adinolfi, he assured me he'd look into the problem and correct it. *Spacemuffins* come with a 90-day limited warranty. (Warranty periods for most trigger pads average one year.)

Aesthetics

Spacemuffins' appearance won't raise a lot of eyebrows. Most non-drummers, I suspect, will have no idea that they aren't "real" drums. They will therefore appeal to drummers who think that small or odd-shaped pads are out of context with an existing kit or their band's image. All that aside, *Spacemuffins* are beautiful.

Their tension casings feature a clean, simple design, and the black front bass drum head with the *Spacemuffins* logo is striking. Standard drum colors are red, blue, white, and chrome. Custom coverings will be available.

Conclusions

Spacemuffins' physical emulation of acoustic drums won't exactly advance the evolution of electronic drumming, but it will facilitate an easy transition for first-time electronics users, eliminating the need for them to modify their technique or approach to the instrument. The pads' response is comparable to the best I've played, and their feel definitely *is* the best. *Spacemuffins* won't suit every electronics drummer's needs, but they may attract a multitude of drummers who wouldn't otherwise give electronics a second look. The five-piece kit lists for \$1,399. Further information may be obtained from Boom Theory Corp., P.O. Box 2077, Redmond, WA 98073, (206) 861-7396.



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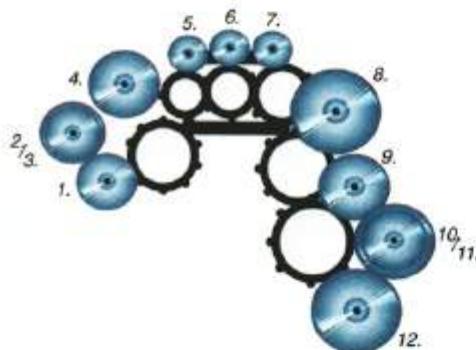
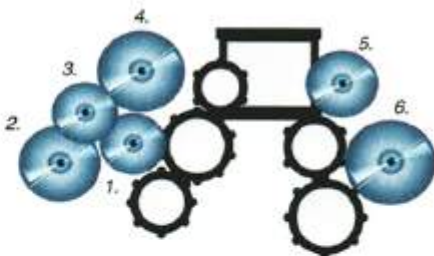
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5) #6 Cup Chime
6) #5 Cup Chime
7) 8" 3000 Rude Splash (top)/8" 2002 Bell (bottom) (as Hi-Hat)
8) 20" Paiste Line Dry Ride
9) 15" 3000 Rude Hi-Hat
10) 14" Paiste Line Fast Crash
11) 18" Paiste Line Fast Crash
12) 20" Paiste Line Thin China

Favorite Recordings:

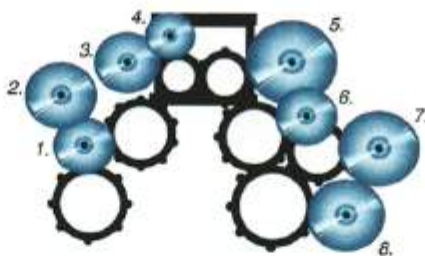
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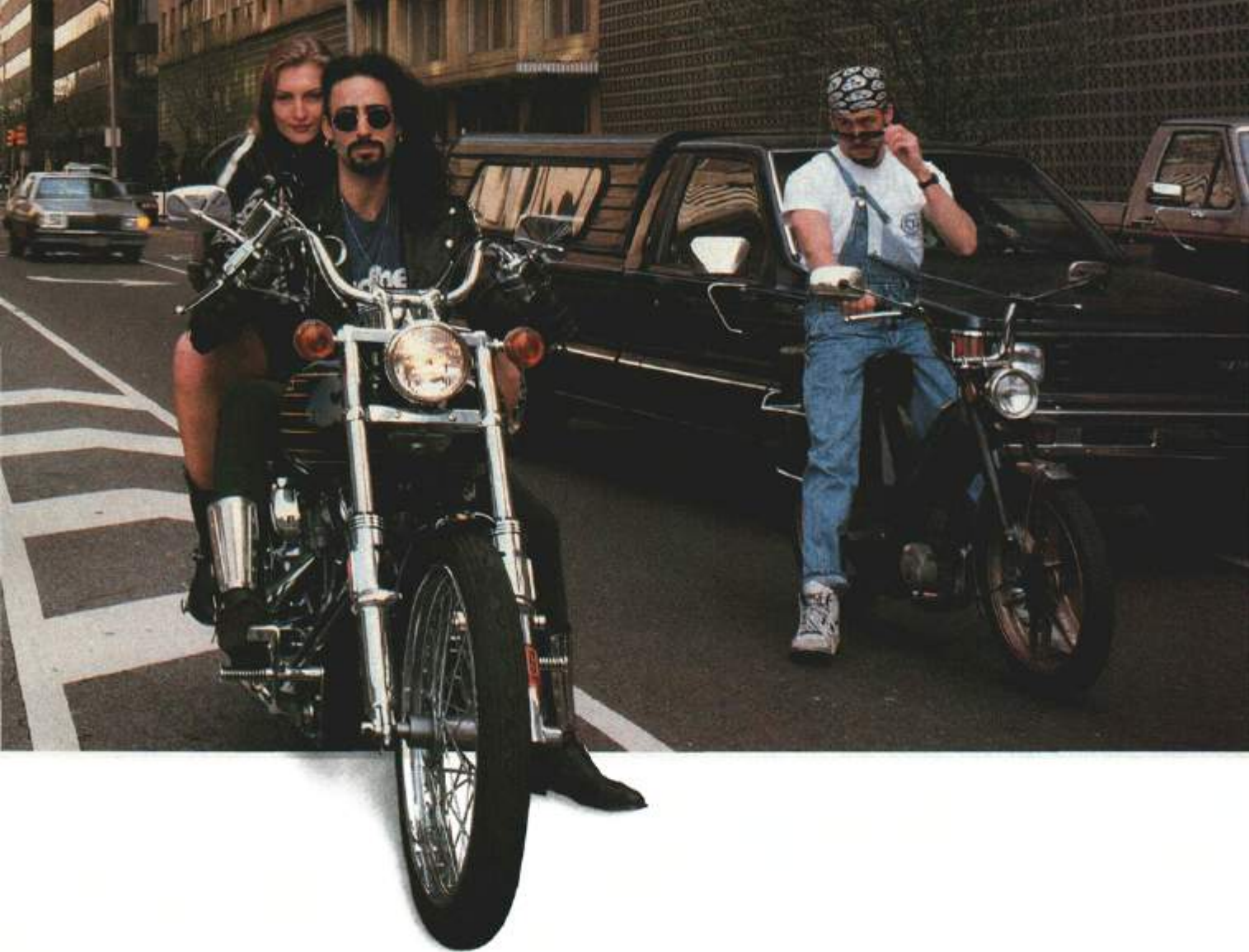


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Style & Analysis: Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste

by Rick Mattingly



Perhaps the best way to describe the Meters is as a New Orleans version of Booker T. & the M.G.'s. Both bands flourished during the late '60s to early '70s, both had the same instrumentation of guitar, organ, bass, and drums, and both served as studio bands backing other

artists in addition to making records of their own.

But that's not to say that they sounded the same. The Meters' New Orleans funk tended to be looser and "dirtier" than the M.G.'s' brand of clean Memphis soul. Where M.G.'s drummer Al Jackson was the master of economy, making everything groove largely through his simple backbeats, Meters drummer "Ziggy" Modeliste was a busy player who incorporated ghost notes and "second line" bass drum beats into a style that foreshadowed the work of David Garibaldi and Steve Gadd. But where those drummers perfected an ultra-precise way of playing that called for tight, muffled drums, Zigaboo was a bit looser and used open, ringing drums.

Below are several examples of the types of grooves Modeliste played with the Meters. Most of these tunes were recorded between 1968 and 1971.

"Cissy Strut" This is a prime example of Zigaboo's style: busy, syncopated bass drum figures under sparse hi-hat, with solid backbeats, often adding the "&" of 4 on the snare as well. M.M. = 88

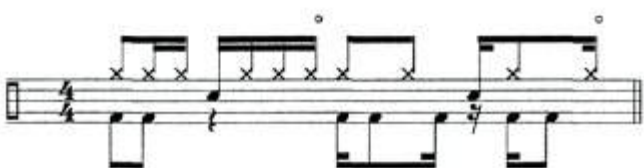


On the chorus, Ziggy played a slightly different beat, mostly between snare and bass, with the two hi-hat notes at the end played on a partially open "swishy" hi-hat.



"Sophisticated Cissy" Zigaboo often played a lot of variations within a groove, so that almost every bar was different. The example below is typical of this tune, but he would frequently leave out or add notes to it.

M.M. = 72



"Here Comes The Meterman" Again, the recorded version of this song contains a lot of variations of the basic beat given below. The cymbal notes are played on the bell.

M.M. = 92

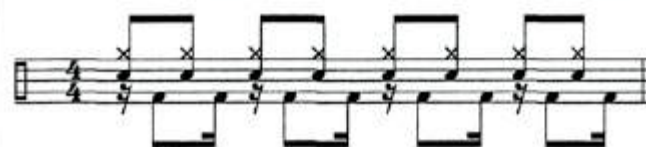


"The Mob" Although Zigaboo often played busy patterns, especially on the bass drum, he would balance that with sparse hi-hat and snare drum, so that his drumming never sounded overly cluttered. The following four bars illustrate his sense of space, and demonstrate the types of variations he would play within a single groove.

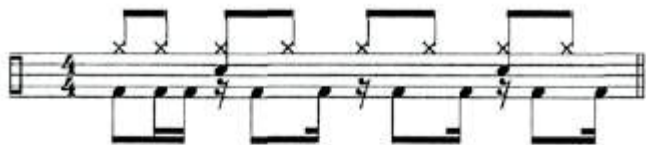
M.M. = 63



Zigaboo also used contrast effectively. After the sparseness in the above measures, which occur during the verses, Ziggy played this during the choruses.



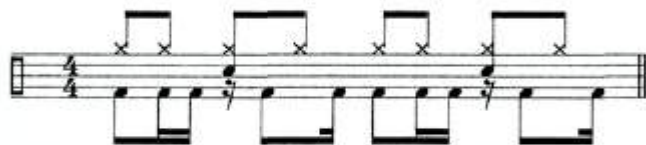
"Sassy Lady" Zigaboo used the same beat for the choruses of this tune that he played on the choruses of "The Mob." For the verses, the bass drum remained almost the same, but he used a simple backbeat for the snare part.
M.M. = 82



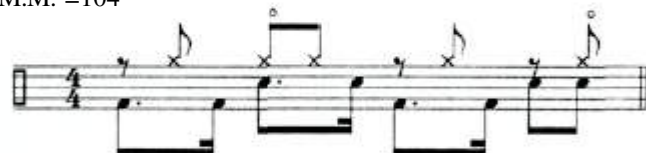
"Dry Spell" This tune offers another example of the way Zigaboo often played contrasting parts in a single tune. Here is the military-sounding beat he played on the verses.
M.M. = 76



He played a more typical funk beat during the choruses. A notable feature of this song is that Zigaboo stayed fairly close to the same pattern throughout.



"Simple Song" This is another tune on which Ziggy played few variations on the basic beat.
M.M. = 104



"Look-Ka Py Py" On some tunes, Zigaboo tended to be very busy, using steady hi-hat combined with active snare and bass parts. Yet there would inevitably be a "breathing space," as illustrated by this pattern. The 3 "&" sounds very open compared to the activity on the first two beats.
M.M. = 88



"Live Wire" This tune sounds almost frantic, as Ziggy played busy throughout. Note the quick tempo.
M.M. = 116



"Cardova" Zigaboo was capable of extreme dynamic contrast. On this beat, the hi-hat notes are almost inaudible, with

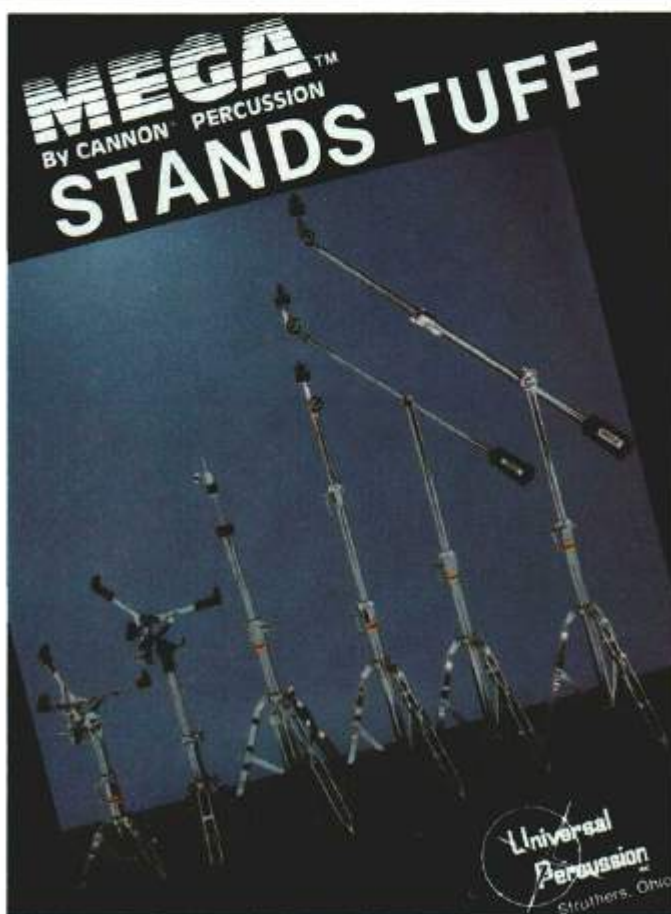
the exception of the "&" of 4, which comes through as loudly as the snare drum.
M.M. = 90



"Art" This is a rather unique pattern, which Zigaboo played throughout the song with practically no variations.
M.M. = 124



Listening to Zigaboo is the only way to truly appreciate his inventiveness and, most important, his feel. The original Meters albums are out of print, but some of them have been reissued on other labels. The tunes cited in this article were taken from two reissue albums on the British Charly label: *Second Line Strut* and *Here Come The Metermen*. In addition, Rounder Records recently released two Meters albums: *Look-Ka Py Py* (which includes "The Mob" and "Dry Spell") and *Good Old Funky Music*. For a recent example of Modeliste's playing, check out Robbie Robertson's recent album, *Storyville*, on which Ziggy plays one track.



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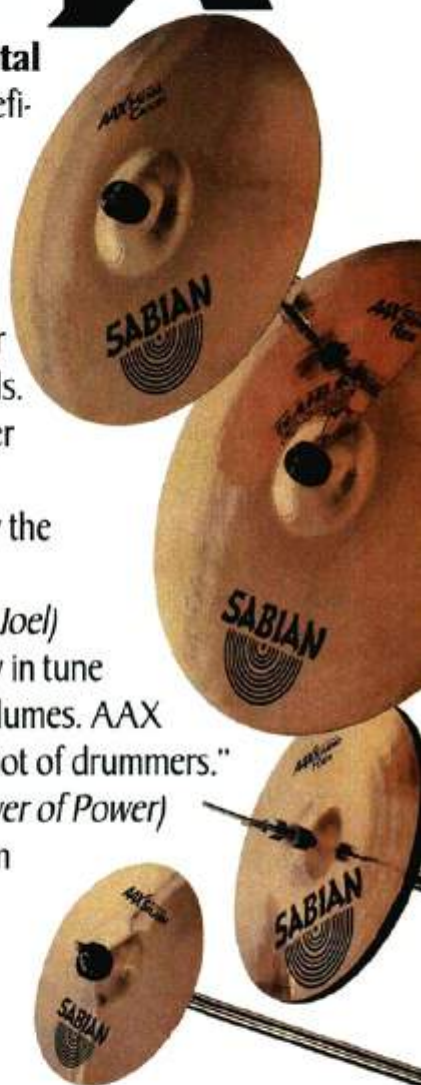
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Ben Perowsky

The Proof Is In The Musician

■ by Georgia Antonopoulos

If you were to look for two parents likely to have a drummer for a son, you would find them in Ben Perowsky's mother and father. Perowsky's mother is a dancer, and his father, Frank Perowsky, is a jazz saxophonist who has played with Woody Herman and is now with Roland Hanna. "I come from a family of dancers," Ben says, "so I like to see people move, and hearing my dad play since I was a kid helped me develop my musical ear. We'd play duets, and he'd always try to get me to play choruses."

Perowsky has been touring and recording lately with fusion guitarist Mike Stern and saxophonist Bob Berg. A fresh and uniquely capable drummer, his sounds make you want to move. Perowsky, now 25 years old, possesses a soft-spoken, calm, even shy personality. Once on the kit, however, all of those aspects are shed, and an aggressive and powerful player emerges. "It's great to be playing with Mike and Bob," he says. "I was a big fan of Mike's back in 1980, when he was playing with Miles Davis. So when I got a chance to play with him, we just clicked. I think it's because we were both rockers first, and then jazz players."

Perowsky's outside influences were originally in the opposite direction of his father's style of music. He says, "I wasn't into jazz, although it was around the house all the time. I was into Jimi Hendrix, the Who, Led Zeppelin, and the Beatles. Then one day, when I was around 14, my dad played me a Miles Davis record, *Miles Smiles*, and then the V.S.O.P. record with Tony Williams. Tony takes a long drum solo on that record that completely blew my mind. That's when I started getting serious about playing jazz. I began taking lessons from a friend of my dad's named Bobby Thomas. He really opened up what jazz was all about for me."

This training—plus his education at the High School of Music and Art in Manhattan, Berklee College of Music in Boston, and the Manhattan School of Music—prepared Perowsky for his exemplary work on Mike Stern's latest release, *Odds Or Evens*, on Atlantic. "I like being in the studio," he says. "It's challenging. I'm more used to a live situation, though, so I try to bring that live vibe into the studio. I try to imagine that there are 50,000 people sitting in the other room."

"With Mike and Bob I hit a lot of notes because *they* are playing a lot of notes, so the music lends itself to that," he says.



Photo by Georgia Antonopoulos

"But I actually prefer to lay back and groove. With these guys it's really easy to get tired out. I need a lot of stamina. So I try to play as relaxed as possible, and I try to remember to breathe. I do Tai Chi, which is an excellent exercise that focuses on breathing. I feel better when I play if I can exercise beforehand."

A lengthy solo that Perowsky delivered in a recent concert with Stern bears mentioning. In this solo, he took the listeners from one groove to another with unique segues, and created a feel one couldn't help but move to. When asked about the way he approaches his solos, Perowsky comments, "I just try to play as musically as possible. I try to think about that rather than my chops. That might be why I play a lot of different segues and grooves. I try to tell a story. Also," he shakes his head, "I've seen Stern with Dennis Chambers. Dennis has been a big influence on me. So in order to do these gigs, I had to go to the shed and come up with some other stuff, instead of trying to fill his shoes."

"I really try to play from the heart," Perowsky continues. "If I'm in a funny mood, I play something that may be funny. Or I'll play something that sounds angry if I'm feeling that way. I play for the tune, but when they leave me out there for fifteen minutes, I kind of forget about the tune, take a little excursion, and then come back. Lately I've been working on endurance at my studio. For my own purposes, I've been working on polyrhythms, playing one groove and all of a sudden bringing another groove in—like metric modulation, where I take a dotted quarter note and make that the new quarter note. I'm playing this new groove at another tempo, but I keep the original groove in my head and go back to it. It's really fun."

Perowsky describes how he fits in with Stern's band in terms of equipment. "Mike likes a lot of cymbal sounds—a real washy

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thing going on with the cymbals. He likes sizzle cymbals especially, because there are no keyboards in the band. I'm playing and endorsing Zildjian cymbals. With Mike I use a 22" K Custom ride, an 18" Flat Ride, and 15" and 17" Dark Crashes. I think I need some bigger crashes; the smaller ones are kind of dying off too quickly. I also have an 18" China and a 10" splash and either 13" or 14" hi-hats. I'm not too crazy about the new 13" hi-hats, though, because the open hi-hat doesn't have as much spread as I'm used to. I like a real John Bonham spread, and I'm not getting that from these, so I might just trade them in. I'm not an equipment freak, though. I just go for whatever sounds good.

"I also have a double bass drum pedal," Ben continues. "I play left-handed on a right-handed kit. I'm left-footed as well, so that extra pedal over there is really nice. It's opened up a lot of ideas for me. I think some day I'll get two bass drums, though, because it does sound a lot better."

Perowsky had a few interesting things going on before the Mike Stern/Bob Berg gigs that helped shape him up for his present work. "James Moody was the first well-known player in jazz who I hooked up with. It was just a week at the Vanguard and a couple of other spot gigs in 1986, but it was a real big step for me. Just playing in the Village Vanguard was a dream come true. Part of my education was going there every night and sitting behind Al Foster or Billy Hart.

"Playing with Moody put some things into perspective for

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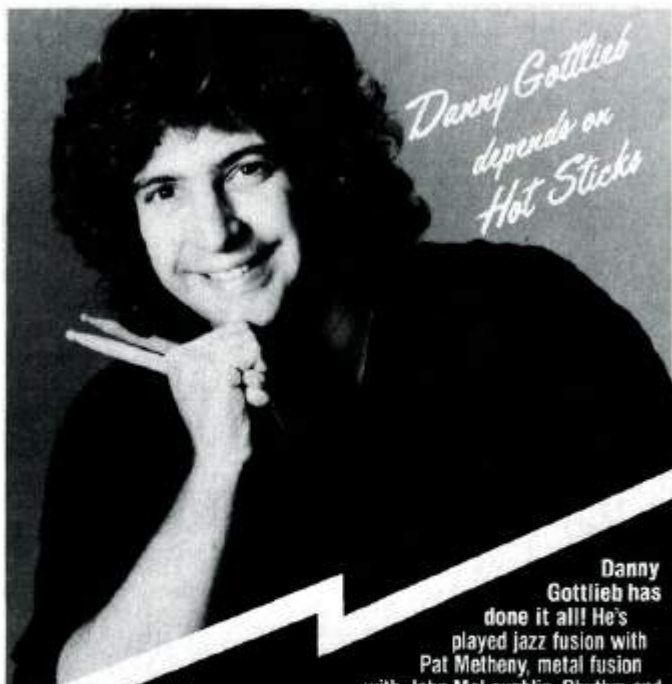
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me. I realized that it was great, and Moody is an unbelievable musician, but I wanted to focus on some other things, rather than just bebop. So after Moody," Perowsky says, "I did a tour with Ricki Lee Jones in Europe and Israel for about a month. I also played with Roy Ayers. He was great to play with. It was a real lay-it-in-the-pocket, funk-jazz crossover kind of gig, and was really removed from the other styles I'd been playing. I like to see people out there dancing—and we *always* had people moving."

These days Ben is also concentrating on a band called Lost Tribe. "It's not your average jazz-rock stuff," he says. "We describe it as 'hard-core-hip-hop-jazz-chromatic-dance music.' It's real New York-sounding—stuff you think of when you ride the subway. Then there is this other band project I'm working on called Fertile Crescent, which is a rock/avant-pop thing. I have a lot of fun playing with them. It's simple, play-for-the-music stuff—kind of Beatles-influenced. Both bands stretch the boundaries of the music industry.

"As far as my career goes," Ben concludes, "I'd like things to keep moving in the direction they are now. I'd like to learn more about world music. I listen to a lot of Brazilian music, and I've been getting into Afro-Cuban music. I don't try to get it note for note; I just like to get the overall feeling of it. I'm interested in developing my playing and letting these influences rub off."



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Continuous Roll Study In 12/8 Time

■ by Joe Morello

Transcribed by Keith Necessary



As in last month's roll study article, the following exercise incorporates all rolls, from three-stroke to seventeen-stroke, but this time with a triplet feel. Starting with the double-stroke roll in sextuplets (with an 8th-note triplet hand motion), play each roll with clean accents and relaxed muscles until it sounds good and even. In between each roll, return to the sextuplets at the beginning of the exercise. Relax, and proceed to the next roll without stopping. You can split the exercise up into a measured section or into continuous sections.

This exercise builds great endurance and control when done as a whole. It also gives you the rolls in a time frame so you will be more likely to use them naturally in an improvised situation. Be sure to try each exercise four ways—as doubles and singles, and leading with both the left and right hands. Always use a metronome when playing this exercise to help you keep track of time.

Three-Stroke

Alternate Sticking

Four-Stroke

Alternate Sticking

Four-Stroke

3.

Musical notation for exercise 3, consisting of two measures of eighth notes. The first measure contains five notes with fingerings R L R L R. The second measure contains four notes with fingerings L R L R. Above each measure is a bar line with an accent (>) over it.

R
L
R

R
L
L

L
R
R

L
R
L

R
L
L

L
R
L

R
L
L

R
L
L

L
R
L

R L R L R
 L R L R L
 R L R L R
 L R L R L
 R L R L R

4.

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

8.

1 2 3 4 4 3 2 1 1 2 3 4 4 3 2 1

Eleven-Stroke

9.

R L R L L R L R R L R L L R R L L R

Twelve-Stroke

10.

R L R L L R L R R L R L L R R L L R R L R L L R R L L R

Thirteen-Stroke

11.

R L R L L R L R R L R L L R R L L R R L R L L R R L L R

Fourteen-Stroke

12.

R L R L L R L R R L R L L R R L L R R L R L L R R L L R

Fifteen-Stroke

13.

R L R L L R L R R L R L L R R L L R R L R L L R R L L R

Sixteen-Stroke

14.

R L R L L R L R R L R L L R R L L R R L R L L R R L L R

Seventeen-Stroke

15.

R L R L L R L R R L R L L R R L L R R L R L L R R L L R



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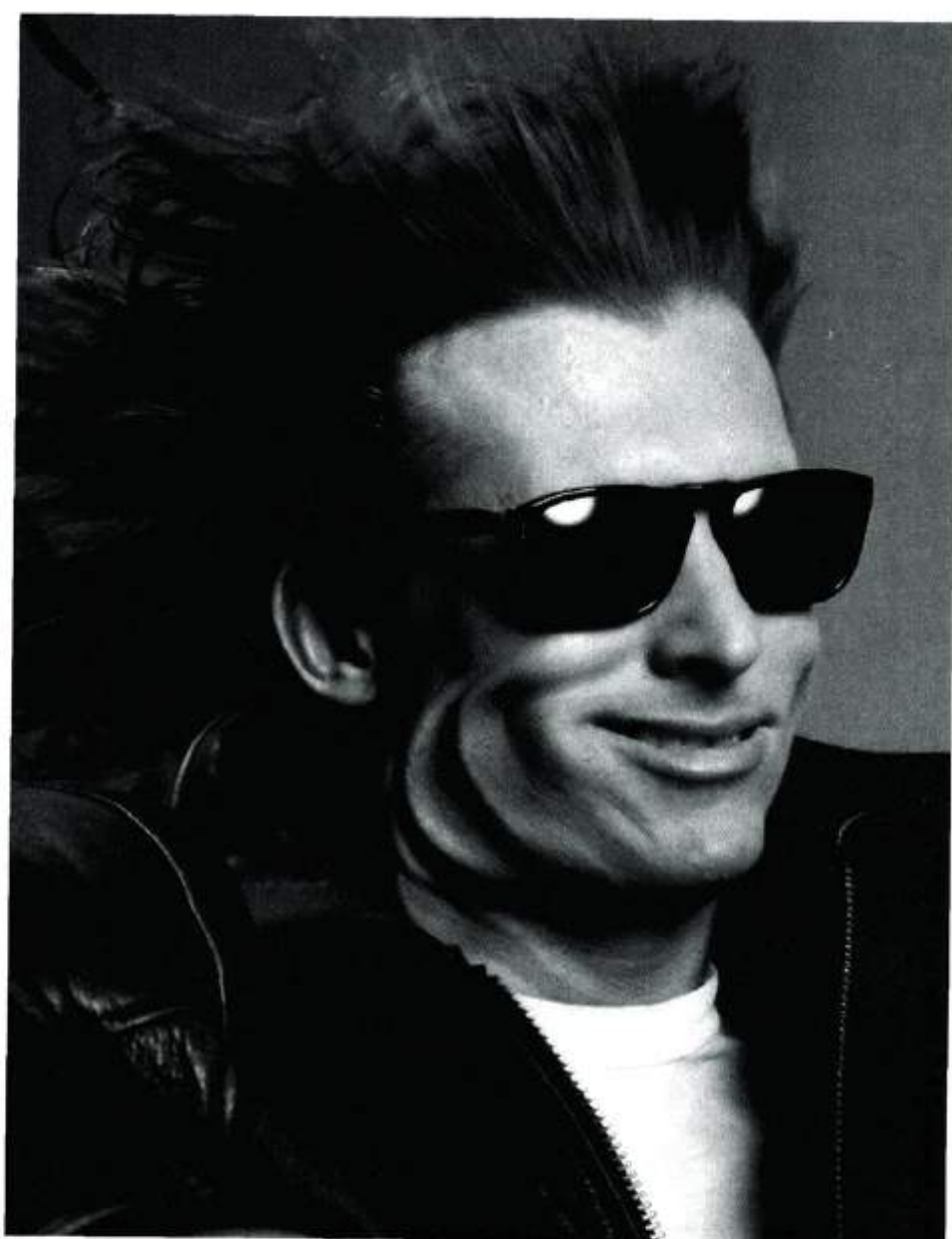


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continued from page 25

organically integrated into the music.

TW: Good, that's what I wanted, that's what I've worked for—to be thought of not as a drummer who can write but as a good drummer and a good composer.

BM: You seem to have a good rapport in the studio with Bob Brockman.

TW: He worked on the last record, *Native Heart*, and I hope he's going to be my engineer for a lot more records. This is the second record we've done at the Power Station, so it's been great. It's a good team all around. Now I have management and a booking agency that want to do what I want to do, and they're really clear people, so they can give me their opinions and help me integrate it into a nice road toward the future. In the beginning of the band there was a guy who was always complaining—I've run up against these people at different times in my career, where what they're interested in is not what's happening now—but he was just waiting to be a big star. He's not really into this band. So he's not in the band any longer. I need people around me who are committed to the band, who like the music, and who want to play this music. That's been my goal, and now I have that. I just want to make music, to play the drums, to keep improving, and play better dates. That's it. I'm not trying to beat anybody over the head with political things, and I'm not a purist. And I *don't* need people around me telling me that I'm a legend and that I should only play a certain type of music.

BM: Throughout your whole career, you've been eager to pursue ideas, rather than living off the past or jumping on bandwagons.

TW: That's what it's about. And it's finally happening for me in the way that I want it. All the pieces are finally falling into place, because I made it happen. I made the decisions. And it's the same thing with composing. I mean, I'm doing things now that I dreamed about when I was a kid. And even ten or fifteen years ago I was saying, "Gee, can I do that? Or am I just jerking myself off?" Even when I was taking the lessons, going to classes, going to this teacher privately three times a week, sometimes I'd say, "Why

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am I doing this? Am I ever going to see some results?" That's when the doubt sets in. And now...it's amazing that I did that. Something inside said, "Do this. This is what you really want to do."

BM: How did you find a composition teacher?

TW: I called up the music department at UC-Berkeley and said I was looking for a private teacher in composition. The first teacher I had was on staff there. His name was Robert Stine. I studied with him for about six months until he left for a better position at another university. And he recommended another guy, a graduate who was going for a Ph.D. named Robert Greenberg. I started studying with him in 1981.

In the '60s, that's what I did when I wanted to study. I called up the Manhattan School of Music and got the name of a woman named Monica Jakuch, and she took me through all the theory and harmony. After her I studied with a guy named Art Murphy, who took me through 20th century harmony. Now I'm studying with a guy named David Sheinfeld. He's 85 years old and he knew Stravinsky. He studied with Rostiggi in 1929 in Rome. He was the first violinist for the San Francisco Orchestra from 1945 until 1978, when he retired. He's a wonderful man. I feel like I'm in the presence of history when I study with him. He's telling me all kinds of stuff, making things really clear.

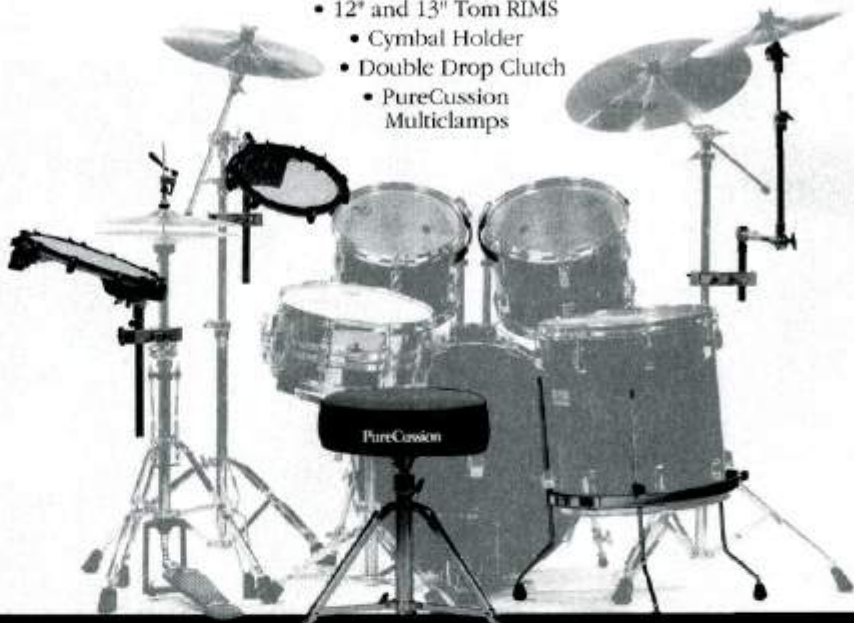
Learning is something I really enjoy. I'm always taking lessons for something. Since I moved to California in '77 I've taken cooking classes, I've learned how to swim, I've taken up tennis, I took an intensive course in German, and I'm dealing in the stock market. The next thing I'm going to do is scuba diving. I'm always trying new things. I feel like an eternal student. I'm always trying to learn something new, and it's a great feeling.

BM: I'm interested in your decision to include a Beatles tune on this new album. I've heard "Blackbird" done a couple of times before, but I've never heard it swing like that.

TW: Well, it's because I'm a real big fan of the Beatles. And when I say that, people get nuts. I had this Beatles poster in my apartment years ago and people

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would come to visit and they'd see this poster and say, "Man, why do you have *that* on your wall?" You know, I'm supposed to be this "jazzier," and I'm listening to the Beatles. But the thing is, it's

the context that people don't want to deal with. When the Beatles hit, I was still 17, 18 years old. That was part of my generation's music.

I always felt that if you're an artist or

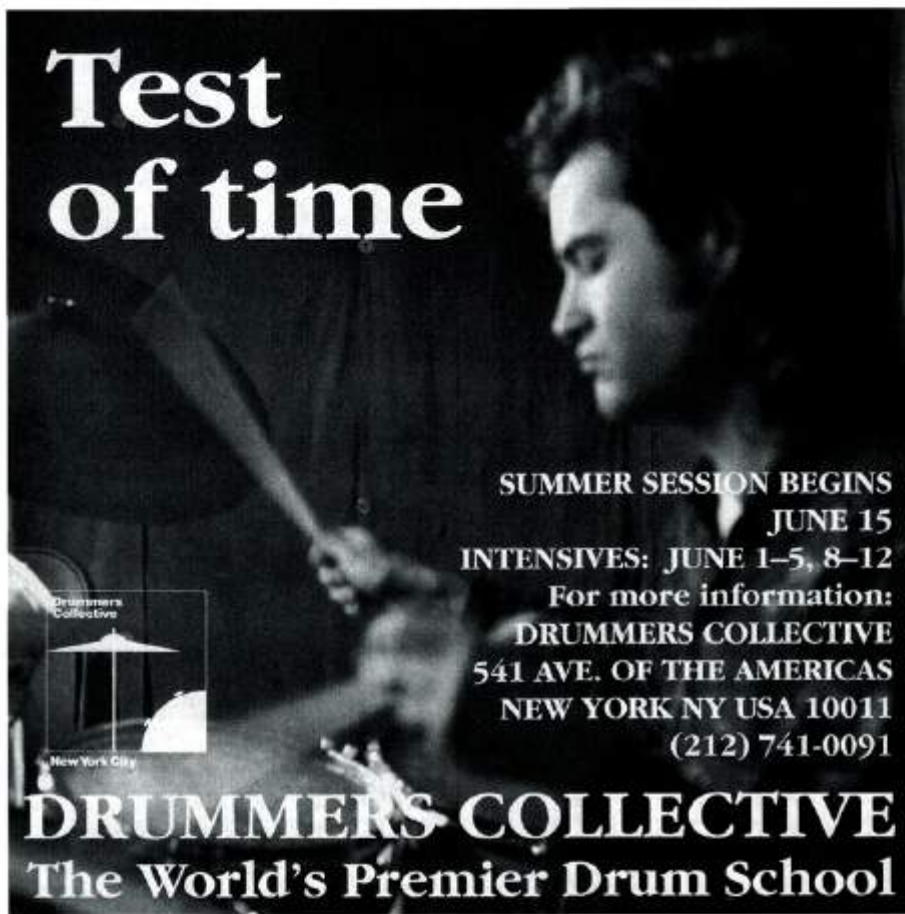
creative person, your job is to be open. It was startling and sad to me to see certain people that I thought were really open and find out they weren't. They'd dismiss this and that. And I'd say, "Wait a minute, I thought you were an artist. I thought artist with a capital 'A' meant that you were able to at least check it out."

I got into Jimi Hendrix and Cream back then, and that was some of the stuff that influenced me when I decided to leave Miles in 1968. I wanted to create a different atmosphere than I had been in. So I said, "What better way to do it than to go electric?" and that's how Lifetime started. And the other influence I had from my youth was organ trios—Jimmy Smith kind of stuff. I used to play in bands like that in Boston when I was a kid. I used to play a lot with Johnny Hammond Smith. So I thought, "Gee, that would be a nice way to do it—organ, guitar, and drums—but do it real aggressively, with a lot of rock 'n' roll kind of feeling, energy, power...BAM! And when we did it in 1969, there was no thing called fusion music. We called it jazz-rock.

BM: The so-called fusion movement at some point seemed to get too polite.

TW: Yeah, and you can't be polite about it. Now fusion is the stuff you hear in restaurants and in elevators.

BM: There's a whole new audience of



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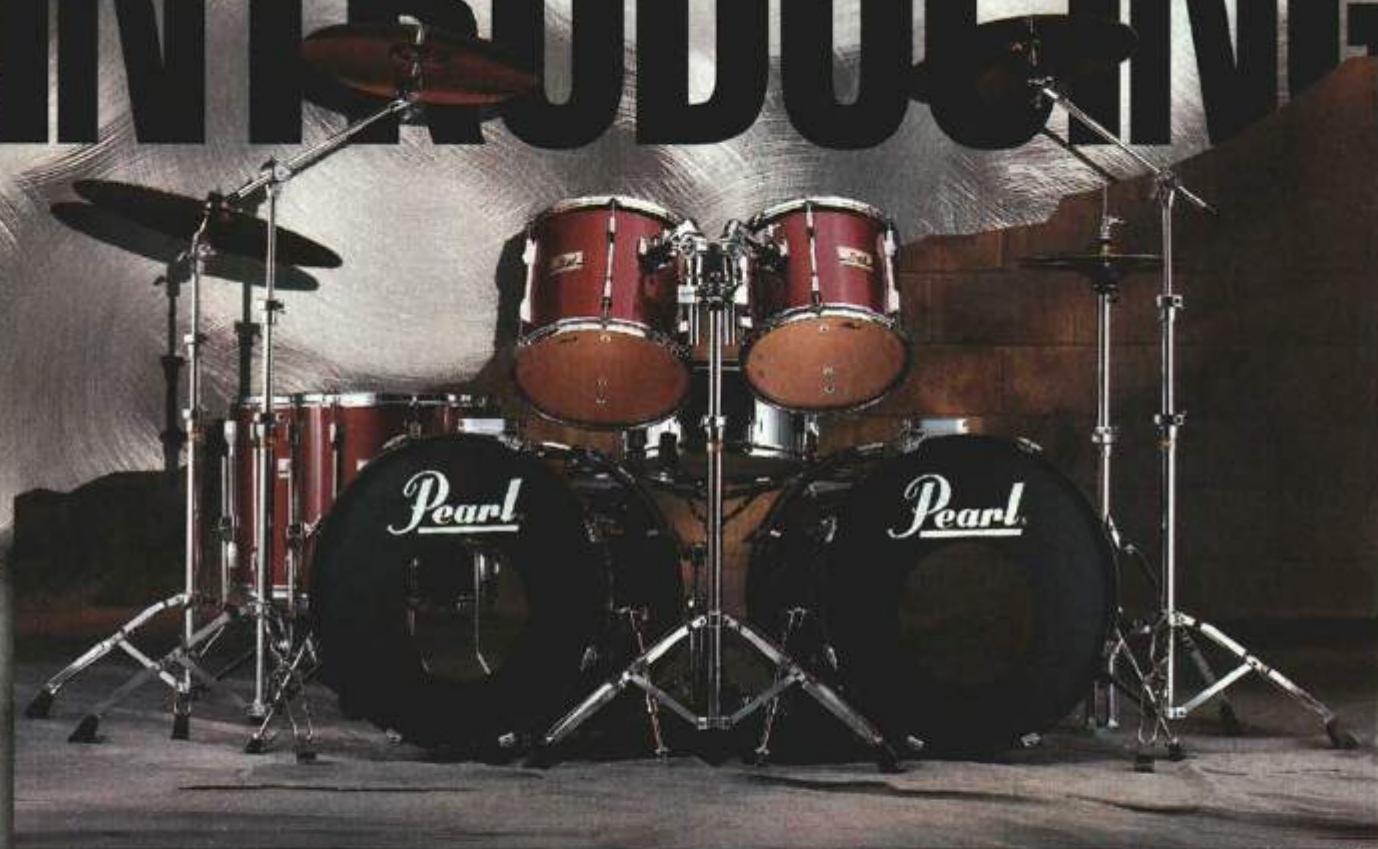
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people who are hearing Lifetime records for the first time, and they're inspired by that raw energy.

TW: I'm glad. And I'm thinking about doing some more electric stuff in the near future.

BM: What were your impressions of the Jonas Hellborg session you did? [The Word is a drums/bass/string quartet session for Bill Laswell's Axiom label.]

TW: Well, I just went in for two days and played the drums over these tracks. I didn't know what it was going to sound like. He had basic bass tracks down. It was an interesting project. Compositionally, it's a different thing than what I'm into with my band, but the energy is there, and that communicates with people regardless of the idiom.

BM: I understand that you had worked with a string quartet before.

TW: Right. Last year I got a commission to write a piece for string quartet, piano, and drums. And it was performed November 1990 in San Francisco at the Herbst Theatre.

BM: And that's probably something you couldn't have done prior to your compositional studies.

TW: Exactly. Herbie Hancock played piano, Kronos Quartet played what they play, and I played the drums. The piece is called "Rituals: Music for String Quartet, Piano, Drums, and Cymbals." It was a thrilling event for me, maybe the biggest night of my career. Just the fact that I pulled it off and that everybody liked it amazes me. At one point I was wondering, "Gee, is Kronos going to like this? Is Herbie going to like this? Is it going to sound good? Can I really write for string quartet?" And after it was over I said, "Hey, I *did* it, and they really liked it." I was just so thrilled.

It was called "A Night With Tony Williams." My quintet came out first and played for 45 minutes, then me, Herbie, Alphonso Johnson, and Don Brayden came out and played all new music I wrote for electric quartet. Then came the classical part with Kronos and Herbie, a 20-minute piece. And there were two shows. So in other words, I played six sets a night.

BM: Well, you do like challenges.

TW: Yeah, it was great. And after that night, I was walking about six feet off the

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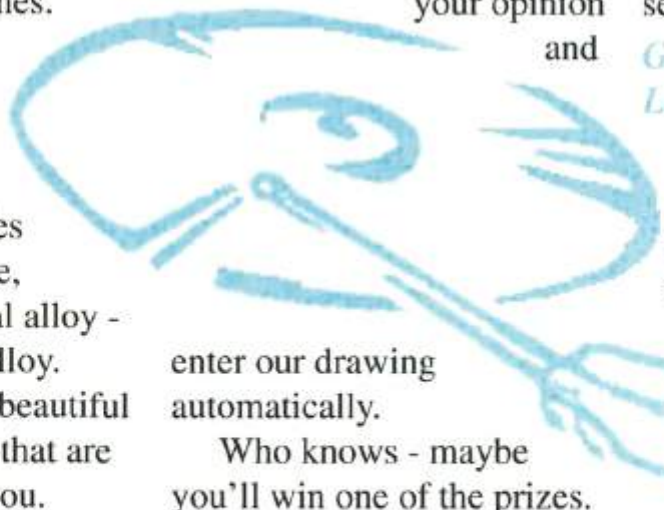
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ground for about a week.

BM: What was the recent tour you did with Jan Hammer and Fernando Saunders?

TW: We did a brief tour of six cities. That kind of music was not about subtlety at all. It was slamming all night. We did three of my tunes, and the rest was Jan's music, stuff he had done with Jeff Beck years ago and some *Miami Vice* stuff. It was thrilling. And it was not fusion, it was rock.

BM: Was it reminiscent of your second Lifetime band with Allan Holdsworth and Alan Pasqua?

TW: Not at all. That was the second edition of that band, and it was called the New Tony Williams Lifetime. I wasn't really happy with that, but I learned a lot from that experience. The guys were great. But the band had a different attitude. It just wasn't the same without Larry Young. He was the heart of Lifetime. And the band fell apart, unfortunately...! think the beginning of the end was when Jack Bruce came in the band, not because of Jack but because everyone started to have their own idea of what it should be. And it was a big lesson and a big learning experience for me because I realize, looking back on it, that if you don't have a vision, then you can't tell people what it's supposed to be. So everybody in the band started having their own vision of where it should be,

and that didn't work.

BM: Did you play at that Paris concert with Miles last summer? *[The event was an all-star tribute concert in which alumni from various Miles Davis bands appeared on stage with the maestro to recreate tunes from yesteryear.]*

TW: No, no one called me. I don't want to spend too much time on this, but Miles' passing is really hard for me. It's something I still can't believe and I don't think I ever will. I just think that...you know...it's just...I mean, he was a very significant person.

BM: Speaking of Miles, on your new record, when Wallace Roney puts the mute in his horn, he sort of conjures up images of Miles.

TW: Yeah, the reason Wallace is great to me is because he plays on the edge. He's always on the edge of making a mistake. A lot of trumpet players right now play too perfect...! won't mention names. I can't play with that. I don't like it. I like that edge feeling, and Wallace is the only young guy around who plays like that.

BM: That's interesting, because Miles said in his autobiography that *you* play on the edge, that you fired up the band.

TW: Yeah, I never read his autobiography. But Wallace plays like that, too, and that's important. I hear a lot of guys playing, and from what I've heard, these guys are playing boring shit. This real controlled kind of focused trumpet

sound—it's just some very retentive shit.

There's a bunch of assholes out there—writers who are mouthpieces for other musicians. And I'll name a name for you: Stanley Crouch. He's a mouthpiece. I don't know if you saw his article in *The New Republic* on Miles. It was disgusting. *[Ed Note: In the offending article, "Sketches of Pain: The Rise and Fall of Miles Davis," Crouch accused Miles of selling out by resorting to commercial electronic clichés and called him "the most remarkable lick of moneyed boots in the music business, willing now to pimp himself as he once pimped women when he was a drug addict."]* He's trying to let people know how much he knows. And he's a mouthpiece for somebody else—another trumpet player who has no talent and who will never come close to making a great record.

The thing that pissed me off was the way Crouch trashed him. What about the contribution that Miles has made to American culture, to American society—not musically, I'm just talking about culture and society—as a person, as a man? It's scary. Why trash him? I mean, what good does it do? Of course there are certain things that Picasso wasn't, that Beethoven wasn't, that Edison wasn't. But what they *did* do was so important that the only reason someone would trash them is for their own benefit. Miles was just too important to do

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that to.

BM: Changing the subject, is this the first time you play brushes on one of your albums?

TW: I played brushes with bands when I was younger and on other people's records. But this is the first record of my own that has my name on it where I played brushes on a track.

BM: Is that like a whole different set of muscles that you have to keep up, or is it something you can just lay off and pick up at any time?

TW: Brushes are a sound more than a philosophy. Basically, I'm not that fond of brushes, but I think they add a nice touch on this record. I get criticized because in live performances people say, "Tony plays real loud." But my response to that is that it's a conscious decision on my part. It's not like I don't know that I'm playing loud. I mean, that's drumming. If you want polite, go listen to the MJQ. If you want soft, listen to Sergio Mendes. See, that's part of the ethic and the whole world of drumming: Drums are meant to be loud. It's like telling a piccolo player, "Don't play high," or telling a trumpet player, "Don't be so brassy," or telling a bass player, "Don't play low." Volume and physicality and aggressiveness are part of what drumming is all about. I play soft, I play medium, I play almost loud, and I play *real* loud. If you look at the body of my work or my playing on the many different albums of people I've worked with, there is a whole range of dynamics. I can play whatever you want.

The drums are real important to me. Part of the character of what I've always tried to do is make the drums sound good to people. And that's why I play the way I play—to wake people up and make people think. I play loud because it's part of the vocabulary of the drums. But then I also play other things. But when I do play loud, it sounds good, I think.

BM: On this new record, you and Bob Brockman experimented in the recording stage, like putting three mic's on the bass drum, for instance. What was recording like during the period with Miles?

TW: Well, I had no idea about those things when I was playing with Miles, and I don't think it would've mattered.

That was a different time and those records sound great. But these are my records now, and I want my drums and what I have to say to have a real presence. And I take pride in the fact that I do have a recording concept. Working in the studio is a whole other discipline and process that has to be learned. Just playing an instrument is not enough. You have to know how to play that instrument, and you have to know how to record it, how to put it on tape, how to make it sound good.

I like the process of recording, which is different than performing. It's another discipline. Recording is another process that has to be really studied and appreciated. I've been aware of that ever since I started. I like doing it and I take pride in how I make records, how I present myself on records—whether it's for someone else or on my own records. I take as much pride in that as I do in playing the drums live and in writing a song.

BM: Do you have a strategy of micro-

The album cover for Tony Williams' "The Story of Neptune" features a dark, moody background with a large, glowing blue planet (Neptune) in the upper center. The title "neptune" is written in a large, stylized blue font. Above it, "tony williams" is written in a smaller, white font. Below the title, the text "MUSICAL ADVENTURES SONIC EXPLORATIONS" is written in a white, sans-serif font. The cover also includes a list of the band members and their instruments, a small image of a person playing a trumpet, and a Blue Note logo. The overall aesthetic is classic and artistic, typical of Blue Note Records.

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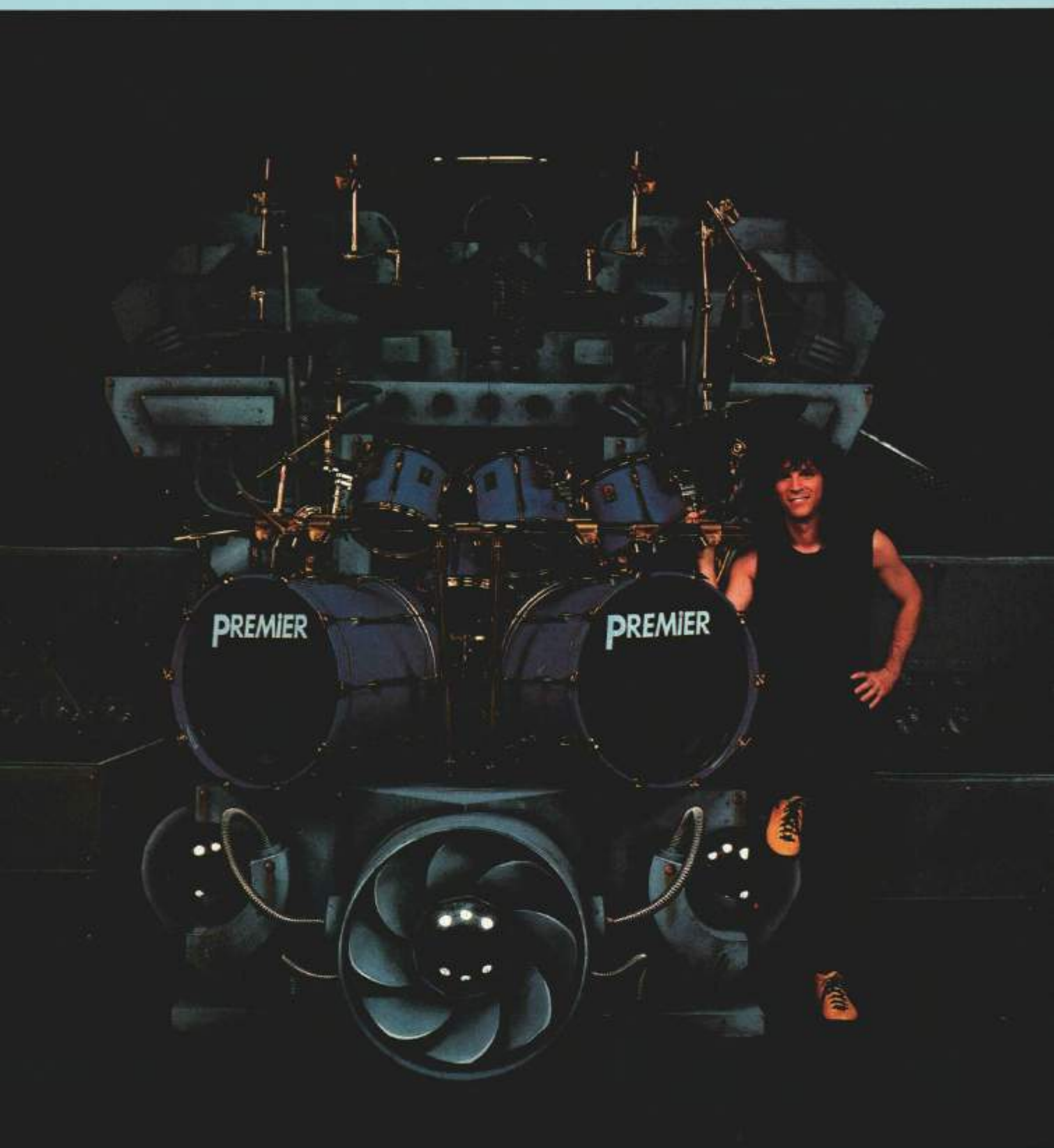
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phone placement? Do you know what you're going to do before the session starts?

TW: Yeah, I do, and I came across that through trial and error and working with different engineers in different studios. For this record—and for the last decade—every time I record I always require that we put one microphone in the bass drum, one on the front, and one on the back. And now in live performance, through the auspices of Shure, I have my own microphones that we carry with us for my drums.

BM: It must've been frustrating to you as a kid growing up, listening to records when drums were not recorded so well.

TW: Well, not really. Actually, I heard more good than bad. I remember one time when I was a kid coming to tears because Art Blakey sounded so good and I couldn't duplicate that sound on my drumset. And I didn't realize that it was because he was in a studio with microphones and everything. Here I was in my bedroom, playing my tinny drumset, and I didn't sound like Art Blakey. I was so broken by that: "Oh God, I'll never be a good drummer." Blakey sounded so good, the way his hi-hat sounded in combination with the cymbals, the press rolls. And there I was, 13 years old, totally broken.

BM: A lot of kids today think that drums started with Dave Weckl.

TW: Right. I know the name and I've met him and I know he plays with Chick, but I've never heard a record. I like to stay away from these guys. He came onto me one time—like a lot of guys do—they come onto me like they're the "new thing" and I'm the old guy. You know? Lenny White did that to me years ago. And what is Lenny White doing today? And Dave Weckl, he's playing with Chick and that's great. But I stay away from these guys, specifically.

This is what I say in clinics: Style is not important, it's the drums. Style is not music. Anybody can get on the drumset and get real fast. But how do you play with people, *for* people? I saw a kid four or five years ago at the NAMM convention—he must've been five or six years old—and he was playing all this solo stuff. And people were amazed. But who is he going to play with? I mean, solos are one thing. Playing fast around the drums is one thing. But to play music, to play with people for others to listen to, that's something else. That's a whole other world.

And if you think you're more important than the drums, you've got another think coming. You have to make the drums sound good. You're not sitting

back there to make *you* sound good. You're sitting back there, first of all, to make the music sound good, and then to make the drums sound good and to be a drummer.

BM: It's good that certain companies are putting out videos now so young kids can get a chance to see Papa Jo playing with Basie or Gene Krupa with Benny Goodman.

TW: Well, I'm gonna put out a video. I'm making a book and a video about the shit. I knew Gene Krupa. I sat on a plane with him for about eight hours going to Japan, and we talked a lot. And it was great. I feel really fortunate that I got a chance to know Buddy Rich. And when he told me one day, "Hey kid, you sound good," whoa! That was really a compliment coming from a guy like Buddy Rich. Shelly Manne was a good friend of mine. I knew a lot of great drummers. I came in, fortunately, at the end of one era and the beginning of another. I knew Monk, I knew Tadd Dameron, I knew Sonny Clarke. I heard these guys play. And through the auspices of Miles Davis, they knew who I was. And I felt really fortunate to have made all those Blue Note records at the end of an era. So it's been a long road, but I wouldn't change any of it. It's been great, and it's getting better.



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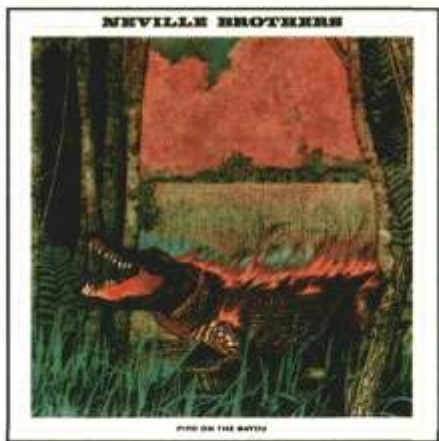
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Herman Ernest: Fiyo On The Bayou

by Robert Santelli



The Neville Brothers—Aaron, Art, Charles, and Cyril—had been known and highly respected in New Orleans music circles since the late '50s. Working in and out of Crescent City groups such as the Neville Sounds and the Meters, and later backing up the Wild Tchoupitoulas, the Nevilles made their mark on the colorful R&B scene of their home city—but languished in relative obscurity outside Louisiana.

But with the release of *Fiyo On The Bayou* in 1981, the fortunes on the Neville Brothers began to change. Their self-titled debut album on Capitol Records, released three years earlier, had stiffed—mostly because the music on it was more disco than New Orleans R&B. But on *Fiyo*, the brothers went back to doing what they had always done best—playing and singing soulful rhythm & blues tunes that were fortified with funk and traditional, second-line arrangements.

The Neville Brothers were competent musicians—not to mention gifted vocalists—but no brother played drums well enough to fill that position in the band. Thus, for the album, the Nevilles brought

in Herman Ernest. A highly regarded free-lancer, Ernest had backed up nearly every New Orleans artist of note, and was known for his ability to create particularly funky grooves. (Listen to his licks on Patti LaBelle & the Blue Belles' 1975 hit single, "Lady Marmalade.")

It was Ernest's powerful rhythms that fueled such tracks as "Hey Pocky Way," "Brother John/Iko Iko," and the title tune—and helped *Fiyo On The Bayou* become the critical success that it was in 1981. After completing a short tour to promote the album, Ernest chose not to remain a part of the Neville Brothers' band. Still based out of New Orleans, today he works with such artists as Etta James, Dr. John, and Boz Scaggs.

RS: How did you get involved in the *Fiyo On The Bayou* project?

HE: I'd known Cyril Neville for years. We go back to a group called Sam & the Soul Machine. I also knew the Nevilles from playing with Alan Toussaint's rhythm section here in New Orleans. Anyway, when the Nevilles got their deal with A&M Records, they decided they were going to do some of the old Meters stuff like "Fire On The Bayou" and "Hey Pocky Way." These were songs that I had played many, many times, so I knew them cold. At the time, Willie Green [the Neville Brothers' present drummer] was the group's back-up drummer. The word was out that the Neville Brothers got this big deal and that they were going to make a new record. I was the studio drummer with Alan Toussaint, and I was getting called for a lot of sessions. The Nevilles called me—not to play on the sessions, but to rehearse the tunes they planned to put on the record. The key, they said, was that they wanted to do these old songs, but update them—make them funky, *real* funky. So the first day that we rehearsed, there were a lot of chiefs and not too many Indians. Everybody was searchin' for ideas and ways to make the old stuff sound hip.

RS: If you were hired to do the rehearsals, how did you wind up on the album?

HE: None of the drummers they

brought in after me worked. Finally, the producer of the album, Joel Dorn, made a fuss about it and said they weren't going anyplace without the right drummer. That's when one of the engineers said, "Well, you had the right drummer in here earlier, but you run him off." He was referring to me, and he said it as a compliment. So the Nevilles called me back. But it put me in a weird position because I was wondering what Willie Green would feel about the situation. I thought it might be kind of cold-blooded—not using Willie—since he seemed to be in pretty tight with the Brothers. But I was offered the gig, so I figured they must have known what they were doing.

RS: Did Dorn or the Neville Brothers tell you precisely what they wanted you to play?

HE: They said they wanted things funky. What I did to that particular New Orleans kind of street beat—which is what they were after and what I called the "Zigaboo Special" [named after legendary Meters drummer Joseph "Zigaboo" Modeliste]—was break up the top part of the beat, drop a little hi-hat into it, and make it kind of skip along. What I came up with surprised me. I mean, it really worked. Before we knew it, we had a groove the Brothers could work with. What made things even easier for me was the fact that bass player David Barard was also on the gig. We had done a lot of dates together in the past, and we always locked in with each other in no time.

RS: The songs the Nevilles chose to record—"Hey Pocky Way," "Iko Iko," "Fire On The Bayou"—had been New Orleans standards for some time. Perhaps that facilitated things, too.

HE: Oh, sure. If you're from New Orleans and you don't know "Pocky Way," you might as well hang it up. "Pocky Way" is an old Indian chant type of song. It's a great song for people to sing and play around with when they're working or when they go on long bus trips. People will take whatever they can find—a nickel, a knife, whatever—and tap out a rhythm on the back seat or the

side of the bus.

RS: I assume the song "Fire On The Bayou" also had that "Zigaboo Special" rhythmic structure. What else did you do to change that song?

HE: Most of the cats that played "Fire On The Bayou" here in New Orleans did a hi-hat part with an off backbeat. So I changed it by swinging on the hi-hat with one lick. I kept the exact same bass drum pattern, though. I also threw in some drum fills, which older interpretations didn't have. You see, when you fool with traditional songs, you better fool with them *right*. Otherwise you'll embarrass yourself.

RS: *Fiyo In The Bayou* was, if I'm not mistaken, recorded at The Studio in the Country, the place that's located just outside of New Orleans in Bogalusa.

HE: That's right. It's a great studio for drum sounds. When they built that studio, they were definitely thinking sound. It's pretty secluded, too, and that's good. It's about an hour outside of New Orleans, and it's hidden in the woods. If you don't know the turn, you'll never find it.

RS: I've heard stories about the rides out to the studio to record *Fiyo*.

HE: Oh, yeah. [laughs] See, the Nevilles leased one of those tour buses here in New Orleans to get everybody to the studio, and then back again to the city. Let me tell you, we had the groove going on that bus. We'd get the pace on the bus—you know, get the firewood burning. It was like a football team traveling to the big game. People were singing and tapping out rhythms. It was heavy enough so that by the time we arrived at the studio, we couldn't wait to start playing with real instruments. And then there was the food. Whenever you worked at The Studio in the Country, Gene [Eugene Foster] hired a cook who made this food that, *man*, would hurt your tastebuds. [laughs] I mean it was unbelievably good—no matter what he made. And this made the sessions extra special. All the guys would look forward to lunch or dinner. And the spices, well they just got us goin'.

RS: Besides Charles Neville playing per-

cussion on that album, so did Ralph MacDonald, Ivan Neville, and Kenneth Williams. Did they interact much with you?

HE: Ralph put his tracks on in New York. But on "Brother John/Iko Iko," we had a percussion team, let me tell you. We had Dr. John, Afro [Kenneth] Williams, who used to play with Chocolate Milk, Cyril Neville, and some other cats—and wow, did it happen. Dr. John played a bass drum head; you hear that thing flapping out in the very beginning of the song. Everybody just picked up whatever was laying around, and miked them up.

It was amazing, man. I came up with this Latin type of Island feel with tomtom fills and hitting the sticks on the side of the drums. Don't ask me where I got the idea from. I like to come up with funky licks that sound like there's a bunch of overdubbing going on. I like for people to hear that and say, "Wow, how do you pull that off?" So I just started working on this lick, and everybody picked up on it. It turned into some sort of voodoo chant or a tide moving in and out. People were banging on beer bottles. Half the percussion stuff we recorded didn't even make it onto the record because it would have been too powerful, you know. It was like voodoo magic. I listen to that song and the rhythms just start creeping up on me. And before I know it, I get the same feeling I got back in the studio when we recorded it.

RS: Were most of the tracks recorded live?

HE: Everything except tracks like "The Ten Commandments Of Love" and "Mona Lisa."

RS: What song on *Fiyo* was the most difficult for you to get right?

HE: The hardest ones were "Hey Pocky Way" and "Fire On The Bayou" because, as I said earlier, those songs had become a part of the New Orleans musical tradition. I had to be extra careful. I mean, here the Brothers wanted something new and different for tunes that everybody knew went a particular way. The hard part was to come up with the right edge, the right freshness. That was the

big challenge. At the time, I was also working on a Fats Domino album. It was called *Fats Domino—1980*. So I'd go from the Nevilles over to Fats. Now that was heavy, because the way Fats likes to record, well, it's one big party. He goes into a recording session full blast, and the cats he used on the sessions were all big drinkers, too. Me, I can't play and drink. But just to keep in the spirit of things, I'd have a drink or two, and before I knew it, I was on my way to getting drunk. [laughs]

RS: What happened after *Fiyo On The Bayou* was finished?

HE: I did a promotional tour with the Brothers. The record company asked for the original players to do the tour. It only lasted three weeks, so I did it. But at the time, I was putting together my own band. That was on my mind. The Neville Brothers band was one fine band, though. We had five or six horns, Leo Nocentelli played guitar, there were background singers—man, we were smokin'! A friend of mine gave me a tape of a show we did at the Beacon Theater in New York. The grooves we had goin' were unbelievable.

RS: Did the Neville Brothers offer you a full-time position in the band?

HE: Yes, they did, right after the promotional tour. But needless to say, I didn't take it.

RS: When you look back at your recording career, do you see *Fiyo On The Bayou* as one of the most memorable records you played on?

HE: Oh, definitely. See, the best thing about those sessions with the Nevilles was that they chose tunes that I grew up on. Those tunes were in my blood. Before that time, I hadn't had the chance to go into a studio situation like that. You know, there are some sessions you do that stick in your mind. They never seem to fade. The *Fiyo On The Bayou* sessions fall into that category for me—for the Brothers, too, I'm sure—and probably for everybody else who contributed in some way. Those sessions were like a good tattoo: They stay with you every day of your career.



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MARK ZONDER

continued from page 29

vocals they had, but, more importantly, I knew that mentally and socially, as people and where they were going, we'd click. A lot of it also had to do with the fact that the new album was going to have a different style, and I wanted to be part of this growing style. They were basically at the point where they wanted to change drummers because they wanted to expand, and the previous guy couldn't do certain things.

MP: So did you have pretty much carte blanche to play whatever you wanted to play?

MZ: That brings up kind of a funny story. In the beginning, since they were in Connecticut and I was in L.A., we did a lot of stuff by mail. They would send me tapes with just either a click or a guitar part, and Jim [Matteos, guitarist and songwriter] would write out the time signature so I could count it out and know where I was going, and it was up to me to come up with whatever I felt like. The first couple of tapes I sent back with drum ideas, I was just trying to get a rough idea down. Jim called me back a couple of weeks later and didn't really know how to say it, but wanted to know if he could get me to play *more*, which is basically a drummer's dream come true! Then I started coming up with all these parts. But when you finally sit down as a band, they don't all work out. So obviously, when we started to rehearse before the album, we simplified things a bit and tightened parts up. But to answer your question, it was definitely a go-for-broke approach.

MP: It seems like it would be kind of hard to avoid stepping on each other's toes that way.

MZ: What's really cool about this band is that, musically, we're not stuck in formulas. We're not one of those bands where the singer says, "Turn that guitar down because it's louder than me," or "Stick the drummer in the corner," or anything like that. We want the best musical performances out of everybody and for everybody to shine as much as possible. If you have a bass player or drummer who's unbelievable, you should utilize those strengths instead of just going by one guy's vision. Our band feels that the more exposure one musician might get,

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On *Parallels*, we were a little bit more subtle with that concept. There's a lot more hi-hat and cymbal stuff going on, which doesn't get in the way of the music like big tom fills. There's a way to use hi-hats and cymbals and ghost notes on the snare to break things up and give it more texture. It sounds funny to hear a hard-rock guy say this, but with both records I wanted to groove and make them accessible, but I also wanted them

to have more of a smooth texture instead of "slam, slam, bam, bam." I know there's a time and place for that, but I wanted to go the other way for these records.

MP: With everybody in the band so geographically spread out, what's the mode of operation for the band?

MZ: Jim, who writes the music, lives here in L.A. Ray lives in Texas, and Bones [Joe Dibiase, bass] and Frank [Aresti, guitar] live in Connecticut. For

Parallels, about three out of the eight songs were written before we went into rehearsals, so we had a chance to work out our parts separately. We all met up in Toronto to put the rest of the songs together, rehearse for three or four months, and do the album. Then we all went back to our respective homes and, a little later, everybody flew out to L.A. to do the video. Then for the tour, everybody flew back here to L.A. to rehearse for a few weeks before going out.

Working this way had good and bad points. The bad points are pretty obvious. With everybody so spread out, it costs money to get us all together to do anything. But at the same time, since it's expensive to hook up, our time together is very serious and productive.

MP: How much time do you spend working out your parts before getting together with the rest of the band?

MZ: I usually play a couple hours a day, every day. I don't know if it's one of those built-in Jewish things that makes me feel guilty if I don't, [laughs] but I get antsy if I don't play. I'm constantly screwing around with something on the drums, between the electronics or going over old



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songs. I remember doing things during soundcheck and that I later developed during my own practice, that either showed up on the new record or will show up somewhere else down the line. It's just a thing of constant playing, because the more you play, the more you improve and come up with things. I've turned my hands around and tried playing the basic ride with my left hand—not that I have it totally down—and I try to come up with complicated bass drum

patterns with my left foot. I may never do some of these things in a band situation, but they strengthen my playing.

MP: Have you improved a lot as a drummer since doing *Perfect Symmetry*?

MZ: I'd like to think I have. I spent a lot of time doing physical things, but also just mental conditioning. I don't think people realize that playing a musical instrument is such a mental process. My style has changed a little bit. I've spent time working with just one bass drum,

and I basically don't even use the second one anymore. I've got that down to where I want it, but I have spent a lot of time playing double-stroke rolls with the kicks. I've worked more on playing four strokes with one foot, and a lot of it is just a matter of woodshedding, deciding what you want to do. That's how I learned to play double-bass to begin with, just holeing myself up in a room and going right, left, right, left for hours. I've spent a lot of time in between records just playing with my hands and training them for strength. I just like to play all the time, just for the heck of it.

MP: Do you think the mental aspect shapes your playing more than physical dexterity does?

MZ: Most definitely. If you know how to read, even just enough to get by, and you know the mathematics of music—halves, quarters, 8ths, 16ths, and triplets, and how everything fits together—once you have all that mastered you can play just about anything you want. You can sit down and think of exercises yourself by just breaking down a bar. You can come up with millions of riffs and ideas with that approach. Writing it out opens up so

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many avenues to create, and it's just another tool to express yourself. Guys who don't know how to read at all and have no conception of it are in the dark and are hurting themselves. They're doing it all by ear.

MP: You told me you spent a lot of time recently going over your specific parts. Do you have every note you're going to play etched in stone?

MZ: Oh, yeah. There's nothing left to chance with me. I'm not a jam drummer at all. What you hear is what is going

through my mind, and I see it written out as I'm playing it. Night in and night out on tour, it's going to be exactly the same. I figure I spend enough time coming up with the parts that those are probably going to be the best ones to play, so there's no point in trying to go around them. What I've done with some of the songs off past albums is simplify a couple of riffs or make the fills a little bigger and simpler so the audience can grab them more easily. I still like to play the 32nd-note stuff, and it sounds good if

you're standing real close to the drums and can see what I'm doing. But nobody's ever going to catch it in a concert setting. And what that does is take a song that I might otherwise be sick of playing after three or four years and make it challenging again and give it a new feel. But also, in a lot of our stuff, you can't just jam through the verse and stomp on the bell in the chorus. There are odd bars here and there and specific parts that have to be played, so there's not a lot of room for screwing around.

MP: Sometimes you seem to play a song within the song yourself.

MZ: I'm glad you brought that up. Only drummers would pick that up. My approach is that I like songs to build. If you take the song "Eye To Eye," the first verse is just the kick and the hi-hat, and the snare comes in on the second verse. I'm also a big fan of real big dynamics, and this ultimately leads to a better song. If your drum part from beginning to end is its own song and has relatable parts—like your first fill being pretty simple, the second being simple with a little twist, and third maybe an all-out blow of chops—the building process there is more interesting to a listener,



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even if they don't consciously realize it. I definitely sit down and try to compose my parts with that in mind.

One thing I like to do a lot—and I notice Neil Peart also does this—is change the drum pattern. Sometimes it might just be quarter notes kept on the hi-hat with just a basic snare backbeat, and then in the second verse, there will be a paradiddle played between the ride cymbal and hi-hat, with the snare still falling on 2 and 4. That change of motion will pick the music up, even if the rest of the band keeps its parts the same. That also sets up the vocals well, especially in a chorus. It adds to the song.

MP: When recording, do you do the drum parts first, or do the other guys play with you? One might assume that with all the odd-time changes going on, you would get lost if you recorded by yourself.

MZ: Actually, I recorded all the Warlord albums and some of *Perfect Symmetry* with just me and a click. I knew the songs well enough, and we didn't have to waste time setting up the guitar sounds we weren't going to keep anyway. And it's

easier for me, too, because if I screw up, we can just stop right there and do it again. But it's nice to have a scratch rhythm track and vocals to go by, too, because it enhances the feel of my playing, and you also get a better feel of the space in between.

On *Parallels*, the songs are a lot more groove-oriented, and we wanted it to have more of a band feeling. Also, as a reference point for the rest of the band, it's nice to have everybody record together because, otherwise, they might discover a kick drum part that doesn't quite lock up to what the bass is doing—and you can't go around editing drum parts.

MP: You mentioned Neil Peart. Was he a heavy influence on your style?

MZ: The thing about Peart is that I'd steal more the *idea* of his riff than the lick itself. I like the slower, groove things. I'm not a big tom-tom fan—you'll never hear eight notes descending down the toms from me, that's just not my style. But Peart was one of those guys, along with Aynsley Dunbar when he played with Journey, who inspired me to take the drums to a different place. It was more of an outside playing style.

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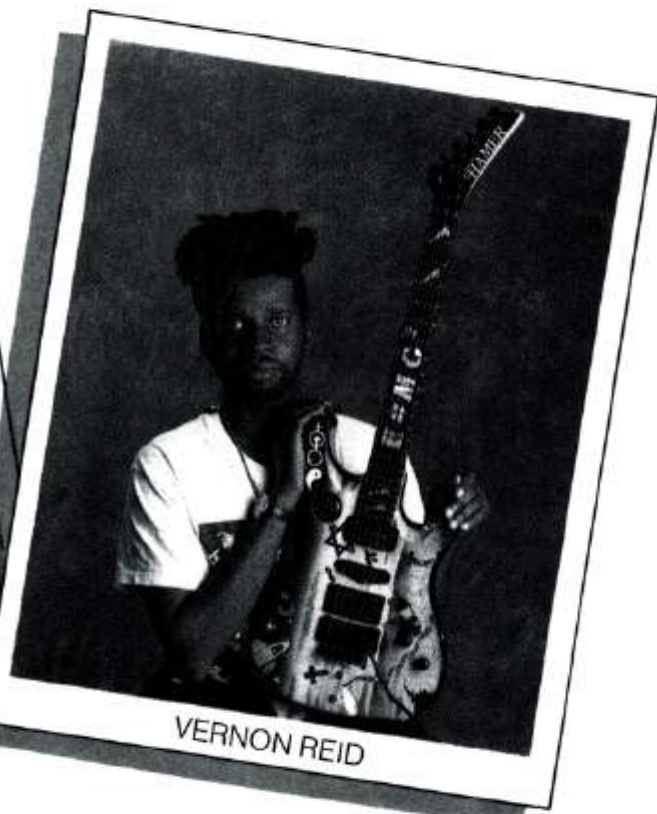
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MP: Most hard rock and metal drummers are going away from electronics, yet you really embraced them on the new record. Where do you come up with these sounds and decide how they fit in? It seems like it would be hard to meld the acoustic drums with the purely electronic sounds you went for.

MZ: I think I proved it can be done very effectively. It just goes back to my hearing things differently than just snare and kick. I like the mix between the two because I think it adds excitement, and the electronics are just another voice for me and a means of expression. I've been lucky enough over the past few years, with my Akai S900, to get literally hundreds of samples from lots of different people—everything from goofy things like Pee Wee Herman talking to dozens of kick and snare sounds. And you can manipulate samples and gate or delay them with the outboard gear. It just came down to humming the songs in my head and hearing different sounds. I like combining acoustic and electronic snare sounds, because you still have the presence and the attack of an acoustic snare,

but the electronic sounds can add variety and make certain parts stand out.

MP: You've told me that *Parallels* is sort of the band's do-or-die attempt at commercial success. If it doesn't happen, what do you see happening with the band, musically, in the future?

MZ: I doubt you'll see Fates Warning going back to doing wild concept albums. We're trying to put a lot more emphasis on the song than on the individual, and I already see a couple things developing for the next record.

MP: What about you as a drummer? This is obviously the most successful band you've played with, but what if it doesn't break big? What then?

MZ: I love playing in this band and the luxury I have of playing what I want. Plus, it's very important for me to play with guys who have a similar musical vision. That's one of the things that keeps us together. Whenever this band ends, though, I'd like to have the ability to make records with a variety of different people. That's something I really desire.



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MALE VOCALISTS

continued from page 33

One of the finest drummers around at the moment is Mike Bordin, from Faith No More. I did a jam session with him last year, and his meter was incredible.

RF: What do you need from your drummer on stage?

OO: Excitement. Fun. I'm not into this precision stuff; I'm into a good rock band. The greatest rock drummer of all time, as far as I'm concerned, was John Bonham. I was a friend of his, and I used to go over to his house when Jason was just a little boy. Jason would have a little kit set up, and John would go on that kit, and I was amazed at what he could do with one foot. Jason is a good drummer as well.

RF: Who have been some of the drummers you've worked with in the past?

OO: Tommy Aldridge, and Bill Ward from Black Sabbath is good. I worked with Carmine Appice for a while, but that didn't work out. He left for health reasons—he made *me* sick.

RF: What do you get from Randy?

OO: Randy is not only a loud drummer, but he's very musical as well. He con-

tributes a lot musically as well as drumming wise. He's not afraid to try percussion.

Tommy Lee from Motley Crue is always thinking of new ideas to entertain the crowd. When you're up there performing, you're not just a drummer; you're a part of a group who is up there entertaining.

RF: What do you need in the studio that might be different from live?

OO: A good drum sound. And to be fair to the drummers, it's not always the drummer's fault if they don't get a good sound. To most producers, it's down to the guitar player and the singer, who they think are the important things, but I won't have it. On this album, we spent a few good weeks getting the biggest and most wonderful drum sound.

RF: So the drums are really important to you.

OO: Definitely.

Jeffrey Osborne

RF: What drummers have you used?

JO: Steve Ferrone, Ricky Lawson, and John Robinson probably more than any-

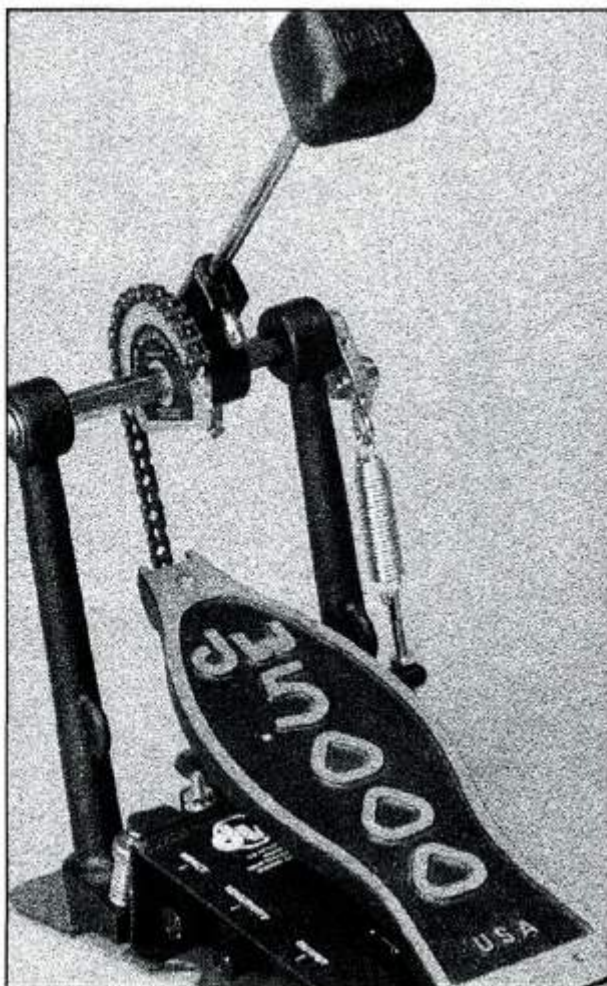
one. I've used Steve Ferrone live, also. Of course I'm looking for someone who is going to be very steady, number one. I don't want the time fluctuating.

RF: Do you want a drummer who is going to come up with ideas, or someone to communicate your ideas?

JO: I think you need a little of both. I like a drummer who will basically follow and give me what I want, but at the same time, add some things. I think that's the reason I would call Ricky Lawson for one session and then Steve Ferrone for an entirely different session. They bring different things to the session. You always want them to add their personality to the track. When you've got drummers like that, you don't generally have a problem getting what you want. Most of them are very spontaneous and come up with great fills. They know what to do. Those three drummers in particular give you more taste than anything. I think taste is more important than chops.

RF: Having initially been the drummer for LTD must give you more of an idea of what you want.

JO: Without a doubt, which helps a great



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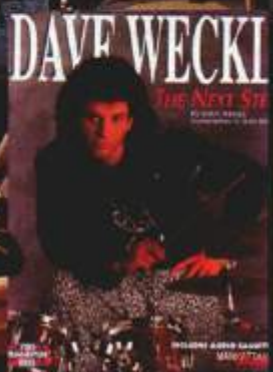
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deal when I'm doing live performances. I feel a good drummer should count all the tunes off, keep it all under control, and lead the entire unit. Once he's played the show a couple of times, he knows exactly where things should be. The drummer, to me, is the commander of the whole ship, and I look for a drummer to set up all the cues and all the break-downs, and actually initiate the whole pulse of the show.

RF: Who have you used live?

JO: Now I'm using a drummer named Lance Lee. Before him I was using James Bradley, and before him, I was using Steve Ferrone. In between there have been a couple of people. It really depends on how much I work. If I'm not working, it's hard to keep good musicians because they're always off working. Moyes Lucas was with me for a while as well. I must say, overall, my favorite is Steve Ferrone. He has such an incredible pocket, he just locks it. He has a very happy feel. It's interesting how different drummers have different feels. Generally, a lot of it is where they're from. A lot of drummers from back east play with a

lot more fire than drummers from out here in the west.

Michael Bolton

RF: What do you need from a drummer in a live situation?

MB: The most important thing to me is consistency in a drummer, having a drummer with great time. It's amazing how many drummers don't have good time. Muggs Cain is like a rock, and that is real important to the feel of everything we do.

RF: What does he need to give you in order for you to sing the way you do?

MB: Because I'm so song-oriented, I'm not just locking with the drummer, I'm locking with everybody and the entire feel. The drummer has to be spontaneous and has to spark—like everybody else—in the moment, which is the great thing about a live performance. Spontaneity triggers this kind of adrenaline and energy that everybody feels. When everyone connects, it causes a chain reaction. Again, the thing about Muggs is he gets exciting and starts sparking.

RF: Are there other drummers you've

worked with in the studio?

MB: John Robinson, Chris Parker—I have to think of who I *haven't* worked with. I've worked with Bernard Purdie, Andy Newmark, and lots of different types of drummers.

RF: What is it you need in the studio? Why all the diversity?

MB: Probably because of the range of music I've done. In the last few years, it's definitely leaning more toward R&B. I need the right players for the right song.

RF: What did Bernard Purdie do with you?

MB: It was a very R&B album I did pretty close to the beginning of my career. In fact, there's a funny story: I had actually auditioned Steve Gadd before I did the album. I wasn't real familiar with drummers, studios, or the session circuit, but the producer said, "We have this guy coming in who we think you're going to like a lot." I said, "Okay." We had run through the songs with Bernard Purdie and everybody was so blown away that we didn't even want to hear anybody else. But Gadd had shown up and we figured he was here, so why not listen to him?

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Al Jarreau

He started playing, and everybody's drawers dropped.

RF: So who did you use?

MB: Purdie wound up doing almost all the album. By the time we cut the album six weeks later, Gadd was booked up on all the days we had. There was a song we thought he'd be better for, but he was booked.

RF: In the studio, how does it differ from what you need live?

MB: It's very different to me. In the studio you're dealing with textures and isolating frequencies so much. So much time and energy goes into each drum and the space each drum takes up as compared to every other instrument—it's a completely different focus for me. I no longer look at the studio and live in remotely the same way.

Live, I think a drummer has to be much more into everything, from the visual aspects to the musical ones. The studio is much more controlled. You want the energy as well, but it's a different thing. On the kind of records I make, I really spend a lot of time trying to get things as close to perfection as possible.

RF: At some point or another, I've talked with almost all of the drummers you've worked with—Ricky Lawson, Tris Imboden, Alex Acuna, Willie Ornelas. Joe Correro was one I haven't talked with.

AJ: There was a drummer named Joey Baron as well.

RF: Each of these players has told me that you allow them a lot of musical freedom—that they should go where they want to go and you'll be there with them. As a vocalist, don't you need them to follow you? How does that interaction work?

AJ: We belong to a mutual admiration society. So we follow each other. The material is what it is, and one drummer may have played more Latin or funk than another, but we all come from the same kind of roots. When you have that, it opens the door for all kinds of mutualities.

RF: They're supposed to listen to you, yet they're also supposed to set the meter, right?

AJ: That's the scripted part of it. Certain tunes work best at certain tempos, and

that's where it ought to be. After that, there are certain passages that need to be bigger or smaller, and there's this dynamic flow. Inside of those parameters, it's everybody listening and feeling together.

The drummer needs to keep eye contact with everybody in the group and with the back of my head, to read me. After a while they can sense a flow in the dynamics, the loud and soft—even a turn-around I'll make in a section of a song.

I shouldn't forget to mention the percussionists. I've had Malando Gassama, Lenny Castro, and currently Doc Gibbs. It's important that the drummer and percussionist just always be ready. I'll turn around and start looking at the drummer, and something will happen that wouldn't have happened if I hadn't directed my energy right at him. Then we'll get into an interplay.

RF: If you had to compile a list, what do you actually need from a drummer?

AJ: After the basics of time, it really just becomes ears, heart, and sensitivity. There's enough structure so that you



can more or less improvise, but I don't need the drummer to hit the same lick every night.

RF: In that list of drummers I mentioned, they are all different. What do you need these days?

AJ: I kind of take what they bring and seize the moment. Terri Lyne Carrington has worked with me for the last year, and she brings yet another thing. After the time, I want Terri to play what she plays and let that influence everyone else's playing.

RF: Can you be specific about what she brings?

AJ: Terri brings a lot of jazz with her. She likes to "spangalang" as much as Elvin Jones, and I just try to make room for her to do that and let that set the pace for everyone else to play to that thing. Obviously, when the tune requires a Latin feel, she has to play a Latin feel, but aside from that, she can play it the way she wants to play it.

RF: So many artists choose players who are similar every time. The fact that you don't must really influence your overall sound from tour to tour. What did Tris bring to your music?

AJ: Incredible fire and also a real love for the jazz thing—but played the way a guy would play it coming from a lot of rock experience.

RF: What about Alex Acuna?

AJ: He really comes from a rich Latin kind of experience, so what he brought had that kind of influence on the time and the feel.

RF: Willie Ornelas said he thought that, of all your drummers, Joe Corroero was the best. What did Joe bring?

AJ: Joe was a professor of mine in a lot of ways. He was part of the very first band I put together before I ever recorded. He really taught me what a drummer could do with this very personal music I was writing with him and some other guys. Joe had come from a jazz/rock background. So many of the first kinds of vocal rhythmic things that I was doing, I learned to do right there in my living room with Joe.

RF: How long did he work with you?

AJ: About five or six years.

RF: What did Ricky Lawson bring to the music?

AJ: He comes from that Detroit thing, which is real R&B. But Rick broadened

his approach to music and learned all the real solid jazz stuff. At the same time, it just had that big fat funk sound, so things took on that kind of direction whenever Rick played.

RF: Have I missed anyone?

AJ: Late last year I went out with Joe Sample and Steve Gadd, and that was the first time I had worked with Steve in a live situation. It was a mini-tour, but we must have done ten or twelve dates together.

RF: And what did he bring to your music?

AJ: E-gadd! [laughs] Steve plays in such a relaxed kind of fashion, I really learned to lay back and let the feel kind of carry me. Sometimes when you're out front, you want to kind of take charge of everything and push the time and feel around. At some point in your life you've got to learn to relax, lay back, and let it happen. It doesn't have to all happen within the first 32 measures of the song. I suspect that a lot of Steve's jazz roots taught him to be that way, and he just passes it on to everybody else.



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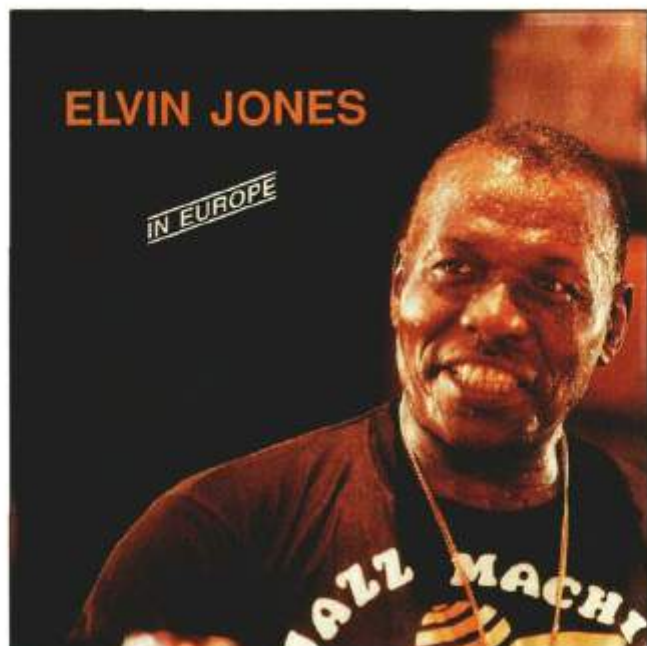
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RECORDINGS

**ELVIN JONES***In Europe*

Enja R2 79675

Elvin Jones: dr**Sonny Fortune:** tn sx, fl**Ravi Coltrane:** tn, sp sx**Willie Pickens:** pno**Chip Jackson:** bs

Ray, Doll Of The Bride; Island Birdie

Recorded live at the Jazz An Der Donau Festival, this disc reveals the master at the top of his form. The great rolling tide of triplets, cascades of peeling tom-toms, polyrhythmic tributaries, slapping brush strokes, stormy mallet rolls, shimmering sizzle cymbals—all the beauties of Elvin Jones' unmistakable art wash ashore with undiminished power. Digital recording manages to capture Elvin's warm resonance (nurtured, I'm sure, by his dynamic wife, Keiko, whose job description only begins with drum tech, arranger, manager, and publicist). The drummer's explosive solos balance his supple accompaniment. And the

wonder of life itself is reaffirmed when that trademark growl surfaces in the background.

Sonny Fortune shines brightly here as well. He introduces "Doll" with a haunting flute solo before unleashing his tenor's broad palette and biting tone, shaded with exemplary microphone technique (a strong argument against clip-ons, headsets, and similar toys).

Werner Stifle's inspiring liner interview with the leader rounds out a powerful statement from the mountaintop.

• **Hal Howland**

SONNY ROLLINS*Here's To The People*
Milestone MCD-9194-2**SONNY ROLLINS:** tn sx**ROY HARGROVE:** trp**CLIFTON ANDERSON:** tbn**MARK SOSKIN:** pno**JEROME HARRIS:** gtr**BOB CRANSHAW:** bs**STEVE JORDAN, JACK DEJOHNETTE,****AL FOSTER:** dr

Why Was I Born?; I Wish I Knew; Here's To The People; Doc Phil; Someone To Watch Over Me; Young Roy; Lucky Day; Long Ago And Far Away



Three different rhythm sections and three terrific drummers grace this release by powerhouse saxman Rollins. Jack DeJohnette rumbles in on "Doc Phil" and plays the entire thing with his usual forward motion, nice tom-tom work, and crisp, quick-thinking fills. Al Foster plays tasteful, energizing traps on a couple of tracks, brushes on "I Wish I Knew," and confident medium swing on "Young Roy." The rest of the drumming duties belong to Steve Jordan, and that's the real story here.

From Keith Richards to Sonny Rollins is quite a stretch, but Jordan does a nice job. Jordan doesn't play the type of four-bar fills you'd expect on a Rollins album, and he doesn't have the controlled Elvin-ish aggression of DeJohnette or the simple, flowing ideas of Foster. But his modern edge incorporates ideas from all over the musical spectrum. If he chose to stay in jazz, like Foster did after leaving Miles' electric band years ago, Jordan could develop quickly and swing just like he rocks.

• **Robin Tolleson**

STEPHEN ROSS*Midnight Drive*

Shrapnel SH-1052C

STEPHEN ROSS: gtr**JENS JOHANSEN:** kybd**ANTHONY SENATORE:** bs**JOEY NEVOLO:** dr

9 To 5; Over The Edge; Wrap It Up; Last Ditch Effort; Lee's Theme; Midnight Drive; Warp; Dominant Figure; Easy Livin'; Speedtrap



Stephen Ross has obviously listened to and studied Steve Vai, whose theory, sound, and unique stylings are emulated to a great degree by Shrapnel Records' latest guitar hero. On this all-instrumental offering, as with Vai's, the supporting performances backing the lead player are top-notch.

Speedy hand-foot combinations and crisp double-bass licks are the first things you notice from Nevolo. But it's clear from the opening cut that there's more to Nevolo's game than his feet. He displays a plethora of chops within the straight time of "9 To 5" and the swing of "Wrap It Up," saving his fastest work for the closer, "Speedtrap."

Though Nevolo sometimes gets caught in stereotypical metal trappings, such as unwavering double-bass assaults, he redeems himself with a lot of tasty ride work, particularly on the hi-hat and China, which doesn't usually work its way into the framework of a hard rock album.

Ross is certainly skilled, and Nevolo answers the call on every piece, some of which are pretty demanding. But Vai made his mark by exploring the corners of his own vast imagination. Should Ross ever do the same, Nevolo could clearly go in any direction Ross takes his music.

• **Matt Peiken**

THE OUTSIDEMEN

Bond Overboard

RJM Productions RJM-828

Ralph Humphrey: dr

Jim Lacefield: bs

Mike Miller: gtr

Bad Dog; Sweet 15; Rubber Legs; Who Knows; 5'11 Get Ya; Block Head; Auto Worship; Red/Orange; Follow Your Heart

The feeling here is like a late-night jam session, except the players are former members of Frank Zappa's band and Free Flight, and they're instructors at Musicians Institute in Los Angeles. *Band Overboard* proves they've learned their own lessons and are well qualified to teach a myriad of musical styles. It's the best demo the school could possibly have, and is well worth tracking down.

This group is bold and creative, like one of Allan Holdsworth's IOU bands. They put together a spiralling, funky shuffle on "Block Head," deliver strongly on the ECM-ish anthem, "Auto Worship," and skip easily from triple-time Mahavishnu excursions to searing ballads like "Rubber Legs." Miller leads the action with a mature style, forceful with his melodies but loose during the jamming sections, and Lacefield contributes solid time

and melodic invention. Ralph Humphrey also gets to really stretch, and he's a delight to hear—strong, sure, and creative. (*Sadly, since the release of Band Overboard, bassist Jim Lacefield passed away. This review was written based on the cassette version of the album. A CD version with extra cuts will soon be available. For ordering information, call RJM at (818) 778-6627 or Musicians Institute at [213] 462-1384.*)

• **Robin Tolleson**

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Verve World 314-511-780-4

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Buthelezi, Nobesuthu Mbadu,

Mildred Mangxola: vcl

backing musicians not credited
Mbaqanga; Vuya; Bayeza; Umasih-lalisane; Jive Motella; Thonthodi; Hayi Kabi; Stop Crying; Bon Jour; Josefa; Noluthando; Kwa Makhutha



If the drummers of South Africa have but a single lesson to teach, let it be that "2 and 4" is just one of many roads to a righteous backbeat. This recording contains enough infectious grooves and percolations to keep a traditional trap drummer off the main highway for some time. Clever but solid patterns, combined with displaced bass lines and popping rhythm guitars,

undulate beneath simple chords and party vocals. A refreshing technological innocence adds to the charm of this irresistible dance music. What, no translations? No, you don't have to speak Zulu to know the sound of joy.

• **Hal Howland**

VIDEOS

JOHN ROBINSON

Star Licks

16301 Londelius St.

Sepulveda/North Hills CA 91343

Time: approx. 60 minutes

Price: \$49.95

This video brings out Robinson's love for playing and his disciplined, no-nonsense approach to his craft. The camera work is good, and Robinson is quite gracious with interviewer Richie Onori. The video contains just enough playing—Robinson accommodates with parts from his Rufus, Michael Jackson, and Lionel Richie days—and it's a good overall look at this monster studio drummer. The Q/A format seems a bit stiff, though, and the inquiries put too much emphasis on equipment and not enough on technique and concept.

Topics covered include tuning, Robinson's range of snare drums, posture, and building a groove, and John explains the rimshot part he played on Steve Winwood's "Higher Love" and the simple overdub part that energized Richie's "All Night Long." But the most interesting part of the tape is Robinson's discussion of his studio game plan, which can be adapted to any type of playing. The duet sections with sax player Mark Robinson at the end of the tape

are a little misleading, because John is playing along with a pretty busy sequenced percussion part. But it does show his restraint and ability to cook along with a click. This is a feel-good kind of tape, encouraging and occasionally enlightening.

• **Robin Tolleson**

BILLY COBHAM

Drums By Design

DCI Music Video

641 Avenue of the Americas

New York NY 10011

Time: 71 minutes

Price: \$39.95

Drums By Design is Billy Cobham's first in-depth instructional video, and it is well named. Billy is obviously a thinking man's drummer with a lot to say, and this video isn't lacking in performance or insight into what has made him a legendary figure of the fusion age.

Included on this tape is some interesting chatter about Billy's beginnings in group and marching band situations. After a segment where he concentrates on snare drum for a bit, Billy goes into the rudiments that he employs in his playing. Other topics include playing left- or right-hand lead, the several different grips he uses, finger control techniques, posture and balance, and bass drum technique, which Cobham explains in intelligent terms. All in all, *Drums By Design* leaves viewers with a lot to think about.

• **Robin Tolleson**

continued on next page

BOOKS

The Drum Set In Practice

by Heinz Von Moisy

Publ: Zimmermann

Gaugrafen St. 19223

#6000 Frankfurt 94, Germany

Price: 34 German marks

It's remarkable how much one can learn about drumming in terms of coordination and chops, and still not know much about being musical. That's what noted German drummer/educator Heinz Von Moisy addresses in his newest book, which contains text in both English and German. It's not a method book by any means, but anyone with some basic ability on drums could use this material to help develop a sense of musicality.

Von Moisy deals with such topics as feeling the length of

notes (as opposed to merely counting the rhythms) and the importance of keeping an underlying pulse when playing subdivisions. He also explores the colors of the drumset, from each of the primary instruments themselves to various ways of striking them, including the use of different mallets, sticks, brushes, and beaters. Other topics include dynamics, working with a band, rudiments, and time signatures. There are also a number of basic style patterns for drumset. This is the type of material that one could benefit from over a long period of time, when used in conjunction with more technically oriented material.

• Rick Mattingly

THE CAT'S MEOW

Snare Drum Solo

HEAD ON

Snare Drum Duet

by Art Cappio

Publ: Pioneer Percussion

Box 10822

Burke VA 22009

Price: *Cat's Meow*, \$3.00;

Head On, \$4.00

Here are two pieces that would make excellent contest or recital material. *The Cat's Meow* is for unaccompanied snare drum and features meter and tempo changes, with time signatures of 4/4, 12/8, 3/8, 2/8, 5/4, and 6/8. The piece is written in rudimental style, and provides enough challenges for a reasonably advanced player.

Head On, written for snare drum duet, is also rudimental in nature. This one is primarily in 4/4 and 2/4, with a measure of 6/4 thrown in simply to extend a long roll. The two snare drums are sometimes in unison, sometimes alternating, and there is a provision for either or both of the players to take an extended solo. Individually, the parts are not quite as advanced as *The Cat's Meow*, but given the tempo and the frequent 32nd notes, the players need to be fairly advanced.

• Rick Mattingly

SYNCOATED RHYTHMS

For The Contemporary Drummer

by Chuck Kerrigan

Publ: Centerstream

Dist. by Hal Leonard

P.O. Box 13819

Milwaukee WI 53213

Price: \$11.95

If the title doesn't bring Ted Reed's *Syncopation* book to mind, then a quick glance at page after page of syncopated rhythms will certainly

recall that classic text. One should not, however, dismiss Kerrigan's book as merely an imitator of Reed's. First, there's a lot more of it: nearly 100 pages jammed with rhythms. Second, while most of the book is in 4/4, there are some sections in 3/4 and 5/4, neither of which Reed covered. Most importantly, while each line of music in the exercise sections repeats the same rhythm for four bars (like Reed did), Kerrigan writes each bar differently (for example, the second measure might use 8th notes and rests instead of quarter notes, the third measure might incorporate ties, etc.).

If one merely plays what's written, one would learn quite a bit about reading rhythms. But the true value of this book is found when following the suggestions listed at the beginning of the book, which offer numerous ways to *apply* the examples. This is where the varied rhythmic notation adds another dimension. A couple of the suggested ways of playing the material involve playing long notes (quarters or halves) on one drum while playing short notes (8ths or 16ths) on another drum. Even though all four measures in a single line might have notes that occur on the same beats, there are different combinations of long and short notes in each one.

Yes, that does sound like the type of exercises that teachers such as Alan Dawson have applied to Reed's *Syncopation* for years. So maybe Kerrigan hasn't come up with anything *radically* new, but he has taken a proven, good idea and expanded it.

• Rick Mattingly

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The purpose of this department is to provide an avenue of communication directly between the consumers of drum and percussion equipment and those who design and manufacture that equipment. We invite all MD readers to respond to the questions presented; a representative selection of responses will be printed in a following issue.

February '92's question was:

Do you appreciate the wide range of choices available when it comes to selecting cymbals, drumheads, drumsticks, and other accessories, or does the number of choices make the selection process difficult or confusing?



If companies did not have such a wide selection of percussion equipment to choose from, the music would be limited and would not have as much of an impact to the listeners.

Derek Jones
Lynnfield MA



Having many choices has made it lots of fun to experiment—and has also helped me immensely to produce the best live sound. Of course, like most drummers, I also have my "old faithfuls" that I fall back on.

Jack Gildea
Grand Rapids MI



Today's "less is more" trend makes varieties of cymbals, heads, etc. even more important. I don't believe a wide variety makes selection difficult or confusing; it just adds to the spectrum of sounds to choose from.

Stacey Hood
Birmingham AL



If there was only one type of cymbal, one type of stick, and one type of head available, we all would sound the same. We wouldn't want that, now...would we?

Ben Barletta
Middletown PA



A lot of products don't really add to the variety, but instead rehash what already exists. With the endless selection available, you can continually search for that certain piece of equipment that will make you sound better. Instead of concentrating on playing better, you are concentrating on why you're *not* playing better, and which piece of equipment will be the solution.

I'm always impressed seeing drummers using "older" or "basic" gear and burning it up. Their playing skills can make

practically anything work and sound good. There has to be a happy medium.

Bobby Sabella
Hartsdale NY



It is imperative that all manufacturers offer as many options as possible. As music trends change and grow with time, so must our equipment choices.

Green Mason Johnson
Philadelphia PA



Choices in equipment become confusing only if one does not carefully evaluate his needs based on the types and sizes of the groups with which he works, and then purchase accordingly.

Jim Wright
Clearwater FL



Selecting from a broad range of products forces drummers to educate themselves on equipment and how it affects the acoustic properties and techniques of drumming. A little research never hurt anyone.

Mike Yee
Santa Rosa CA



All this selection is nice—but is it really necessary? In order to try all the products available, you need to be sponsored by someone or have the money of Donald Trump. The truth of the matter is that a good drummer doesn't need all these accessories to excel.

Myron Katz
Chicago IL



Most music stores have everything so jammed together that it's difficult to really examine drum equipment. If stores could organize better, I would like an even greater range of choices.

James Damiano
Roswell GA



I appreciate selection, but it seems that many music stores carry the same things. Seldom do they stock less-popular—but sometimes better—brands of heads, sticks, etc.

Joe Pearlring
Folcroft PA



We can't get a hands-on feel for most of the products out there, so our real options are limited to the small slice of the industry's offerings that we're familiar with. If manufacturers would

have their entire lines on display so that side-by-side comparisons could be made, options would be better understood, perception of our needs refined, and the right purchases made.

Jonathan Haralabopoulos
Roslyn NY



Drum and cymbal companies should send reps to do demonstrations of their entire line once a year. (And dealers should let all the local drummers know about the demos well ahead of time.) Such events would give drummers more information on what's available. And the drummers could give the reps feedback about their wants and needs.

Robert Richmond
Ottumwa IA



Cymbal manufacturers should supply local music stores with cymbal-less sound supplement tapes for their cymbal racks. Just plug in the tape, and play the store's cymbals along with one-minute songs (jazz, rock, blues, etc.). Drumhead compa-

nies should co-op with major drum companies, so that for any given brand of drums, you can hear a tape of several different head combinations and tunings.

Alfred Alva
La Habra CA



This month's question follows up on the sales-related comments presented above:

Does the variety of selection and the manner in which percussion products are displayed in the retail store influence your decision whether or not to buy, or do you tend to buy what is available based on your immediate need?

Send your response to Liaison, Modern Drummer magazine, 870 Pompton Avenue, Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Please limit your response to 150 words or less, so that we may have the opportunity to print as many responses as possible. **IS**

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What's Your Alternative?

■ by Rick Van Horn

Okay, let's face it: Times are tough in the club business. The recession has caused many locations to cut down from five- to two-night bookings, while others have eliminated entertainment completely. The resurgent popularity of discos and DJs has put a further dent into the scene, and now there are video karaoke sing-along systems in local clubs that used to be the mainstays of hometown groups. What's a full-time or even part-time club band to do? Well, when the going gets tough, the tough (or at least the sensible and/or hungry) start examining their alternatives. There are a surprisingly large number of those available to a talented club band willing to take advantage of them. Here are some for you to consider.

Don't Put All Your Eggs In One Basket

Don't limit yourself to one musical style, no matter how good you are at that style or how much your personal preference leans that way. Remember, the object here is not to display trend-setting originality in order to impress a record label; the object is to find remunerative work in the popular music market. Be prepared to play different types of gigs so that you can expand your "potential-work pool."

For example, if you are primarily a Top-40 club band, consider expanding your repertoire with a few ethnic tunes, a few Latin dance numbers, a Broadway show medley, and "Daddy's Little Girl," and go into the wedding-and-bar mitzvah circuit as well. It may involve some special rehearsing at first, but most of the material that you'd do in a Top-40 club will work equally well at a private function.

The money to be made at weddings and other private parties is generally much better than that in clubs, and there are often fringe benefits, such as early hours, short sets, long breaks, meals, etc. You'll need a tux for this scene, but the cost of one can come out of the first gig's wages.

If you have the capability and the willingness, there are club gigs to be had in musical styles outside the general Top-40 field. Country music is very popular in most areas, and C&W clubs tend to favor live bands over recorded entertainment (which is in high contrast to the "pop" dance clubs that feature recorded music *exclusively*.) Today's country music is a far cry from Hank Williams or the Sons Of The Pioneers; it incorporates pop, rock, and even some funk elements that offer much more for a drummer to do. And the material is appealing to a wider and wider audience all the time. During the week that I wrote this column, the *Billboard* chart of the top 100 albums (in *all* musical styles) showed albums by Garth Brooks (#8, #11, and #49), Travis Tritt (#28), Ricky Van Shelton (#47), Clint Black (#60), Reba McEntyre (#74), and Tanya Tucker (#75). This music *sells*, and I know several Top-40 groups who have changed over to it completely. I'm not suggesting that you do that, but taking a country gig once in a while (as opposed to having an empty space in your calendar) might be both musically pleasant *and* financially rewarding.

A slightly more limited market, but a viable one just the same, is the "society" gig. This is a polite euphemism for fancy-dress dances generally attended by an

older clientele. You're going to play standards, and you're going to be using brushes—a lot. (I find that rather refreshing; playing with brushes is a "lost art" I only recently rediscovered myself.) But it isn't going to be all Guy Lombardo numbers. Dance standards include a fine variety of tunes from the big-band era that offer opportunities to swing or to syncopate with a horn section, and Harry Connick, Jr. has re-popularized the whole

big-band-with-crooner idiom that made Frank Sinatra a star. If your group has a keyboard player who can cover lush-sounding horn lines (and/or strings) you can make a killing in this market, because those sounds are what make the music authentic—and often a club or catering hall is required to hire a larger group (with real horns) to achieve them. And whereas nothing compares to playing with real horns, if your small group can cover the gig, so much the better for you.

Other booking alternatives include ethnic and/or "theme" clubs. Can you cut a polka gig in a Polish restaurant? (I made a nice living doing this for about a year.) Can you do a night of '50s/'60s material, heavy on the

doo-wop? There are still lots of clubs catering to this style. Can you do a (shudder) all-disco night, featuring non-stop, song-to-song marathon sets? In what may be the ultimate irony, I know of at least three clubs in my immediate area that hire *live* bands to play nothing but late-'70s "classic" disco music, from "The Hustle" to "Stayin' Alive"—life imitating

"Don't limit yourself to one musical style, no matter how good you are at that style or how much your personal preference leans that way."



art imitating life, I guess. But it's very popular, and the bands who can do it work steadily, because there aren't that many of them.

Only The Names Have Been Changed...

If your group has a strong reputation in the Top-40 club market, and you don't want to risk confusion among your regular employers and customer following, then change your name, wardrobe, and general persona when you take an alternative gig. This can be taken to the level of high art, if you want. I know of a band that bills itself three different ways, under three different names. They have separate photos and promotional material, and even use some different equipment on the various gigs. Of course, that's not *just* for show; some of their equipment is more appropriate for one type of gig than another. But it still helps to promote the "difference" between the three "groups." They even use different individual names for themselves on stage with each group.

They tell me that the customers who are aware of their "split personality" and attend all their various gigs go along with the fun, while others only follow one of the band's identities and have no idea that the other two exist!

Take It On The Road

During the "Great Depression," thousands of people left areas of poor employment and sought better opportunities elsewhere. If your band has the ability to travel, that might be a worthwhile consideration—especially if you're currently in a major city with hundreds of bands vying for only a few steady gigs. There is still a demand for quality entertainment in hotels and lounges in less-populated areas across the country. Getting booked into them usually requires the services of an agency, but you could call any major chain hotel near you (Holiday Inn, Ramada, Sheraton, etc.) and ask to speak to the person responsible for booking the entertainment. Ask that person how bands for the lounge are booked. If an

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Photo Requirements

1. Photos must be in color, and of high quality. (35mm slides are preferred; color prints will be considered. Polaroids cannot be accepted.)
2. You may send more than one view of the kit, but only one photo will be published.
3. Photos should be of drums only; no people should be in the shot.
4. Drums should be photographed against a neutral background (a sheet, drape, blank wall, etc.). Avoid "busy" backgrounds such as in your basement, garage, or bedroom.
5. Be sure that those attributes of your kit that make it special are clearly visible in the photo.

Send your photo(s) to Drumkit Of The Month, Modern Drummer Publications, 870 Pompton Ave., Cedar Grove, NJ 07009. Please note that photos cannot be returned, so don't send any originals you can't bear to part with.

agency is involved, contact that agency with your band promo. Another source of information on agencies who book traveling groups is the *International Musician*, the newspaper of the American Federation of Musicians. Since this is a union paper, you can assume that the agencies will be looking for union groups—but whether or not you're union members, it might be worth a phone call to make sure.

Divide And Conquer...Maybe

Another alternative that may be explored—but takes some inter-band diplomacy—is the "sub-group." There are times when the whole band can't get a booking, but some members working as a smaller group can. For example, if the group is a five-piece (keyboards, bass, guitar, drums, and vocalist), it's possible that the keyboardist, bass player, and drummer could be booked as a pop or jazz trio. Or the guitarist, bassist, and drummer might do a power-trio rock gig. The singer might easily do a happy-hour gig or an evening in a small cocktail

lounge with either the guitarist or the keyboard player. The only problem with situations like these occurs if a band member who is *not* working resents the fact that another member *is*. This is something that must be worked out at a band meeting ahead of time. The group needs to check everybody's ego, and see whether the policy for unbooked periods will be "If we *all* don't work, then *none* of us work," or "When we all can't work, it's every man for himself—with our blessing."

Keep That Team Spirit

I hope that this column gives you some ideas for job-hunting that you might not have considered. I also hope that it gets you and your band thinking about alternatives of your own that I have not presented. The main thing is to keep your spirits up, use your imagination, put some effort into promotion and rehearsal, and get out there and get the jobs that are available. If the band works together...the band will *work* together.



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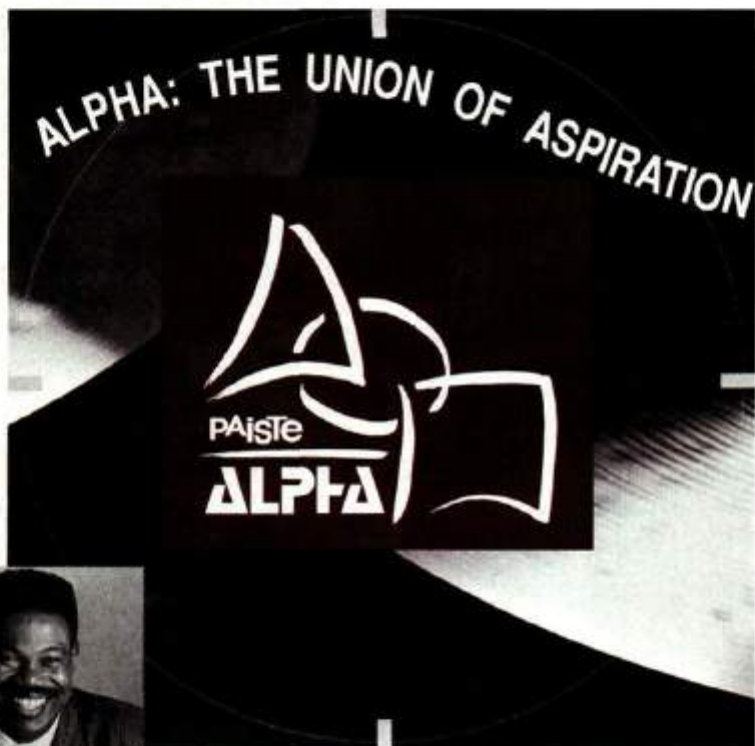
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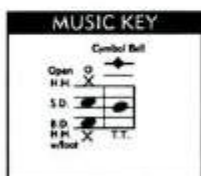
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Applying The Mambo Rhythm



by Chuck Silverman



Since 1939, when Cuban brothers Orestes and Israel Lopez furthered its development, the mambo rhythm has been one of the most recognizable of Afro-Cuban rhythms. Its driving beat has made it a pleasure for dancers, and its great groove has made it a favorite of many musicians. It's definitely a staple of Latin bands world-wide, and has influenced many musical styles. From the mambo bands, for instance, came the style of music known as "salsa." The word salsa literally translates to "hot sauce," hence its application to the hot, syncopated arrangements of this music.

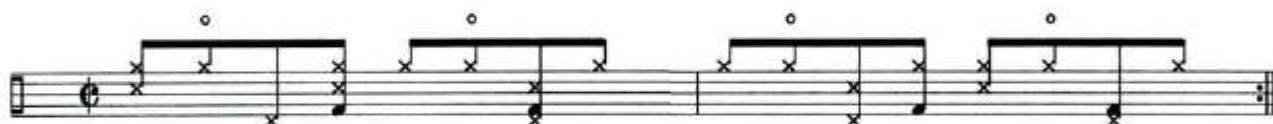
Mambo is an exciting simultaneous interaction of many rhythms, all blending to make its characteristic, pulsating groove. Each individual rhythm has its own important place, and each part must correspond to the direction of the clave rhythm in the song being played. This is one of the chief concepts in Afro-Cuban music and something we'll examine in depth in our study of Latin rhythms. The most important matter we'll examine here, though, is the application of mambo to the drumset. And there is indeed a rich soup of ideas to dig into.

In mambo, the maracas player (maracero) adds a very important part; he is the glue that holds the many syncopated rhythms of the groove together. Here's a way to apply the maracas rhythm to the drumset: Notice the hi-hat opening on the second and sixth 8th notes. Hands play alternating singles, and the bass drum emulates the bass tumbao. (A tumbao is any repeated pattern.) This combination can be tricky due to the independence involved.

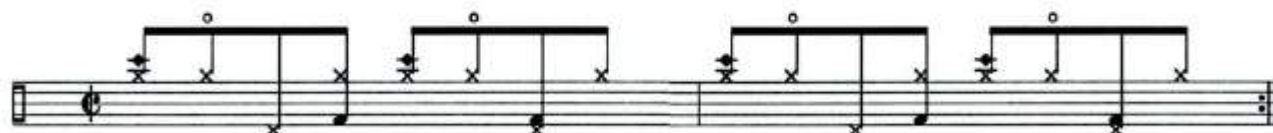


Now we'll add other patterns to the maracas. Here's where we really fill out the drumset's role by attempting to fulfill the parts of several rhythm instruments. The independence work required to successfully play these grooves will give you better control of your instrument.

First we add clave to the maracas and bass drum sounds. Either hand will play the maracas, while the other plays the clave rhythm. Notice that the hi-hat is now played *with the foot*. In this example the other hand plays 3/2 clave. The bass drum once again plays the tumbao pattern.



Now let's add a very simple cowbell pattern. The pattern can also be played on the bell of a ride cymbal.



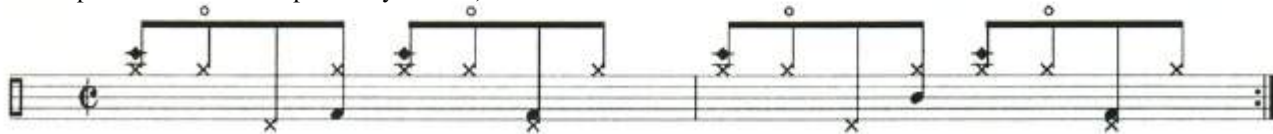
If you'd like, you may want to put your right hand on a cymbal while your left hand plays the hi-hat. This leaves your left hand more or less free to play the snare drum on the backbeat. (In cut time this would be on beat 2.) This is a real killer exercise for your left hand; it's playing hi-hat *and* snare.

So now we're playing bass drum tumbao, maracas, bell, and snare. It's a full-sounding groove with a purpose! And you can see

where the idea was generated from.



Keeping the left hand on the hi-hat, the right now plays the cymbal bell part and the *ponche* (punch) from the mozambique rhythm. Most of the time the *ponche* occurs in the "three" part of the clave, so this example is in the 2/3 clave direction. Please note the change in the bass drum pattern. (After you feel comfortable with the "standard" bass drum pattern, you might want to start to experiment with other patterns yourself.)



One more idea is to add the snare, but this time with more of a half-time feel. Play it and the hi-hat with the left hand, and play the cymbal bell and tom with the right hand. This is a combination of five sounds for a nice contemporary-sounding groove. Again, after you get comfortable, feel free to alter the bass drum to your own taste.



Allow me to suggest some listening examples. My first "Latin" album was called *The Sun Of Latin Music* by Eddie Palmieri (Coco Records # CLP-109 XX). This is a *must* recording to listen to. Another favorite is an album by Ray Barretto entitled *Indestructible* (Fania Records # SLP 00456). To me, this recording defines the word "salsa." Recordings by the great band Sonora Ponceña are also highly recommended, as is almost anything done by the master, Tito Puente. As always, your questions, comments, and suggestions are welcome. Take care, relax, and hasta la proxima vez! (Until next time!)



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Stanley Clarke

■ by David Aldridge and Adam Ward Seligman

In the 1970s, Stanley Clarke created a new vocabulary for the bass guitar. Both with Return To Forever (with whom he recorded eight albums) and as a solo artist, Clarke mastered a funky, aggressive, melodic style that was true both to its jazz roots and later to the pop music that captured his attention in the 1980s. Whether playing with jazz greats Tony Williams, Lenny White, and Billy Cobham, or rock masters like Simon Phillips, Stewart Copeland, and Carmine Appice, Clarke pays close attention to the groove, the pocket, and the soul of the music.

"Airto was the original Return To Forever drummer," Stanley recalls. "I knew he was an amazing percussionist, but I didn't know he could play the drums. He would go from a Brazilian feel to jazz swing easily; you can really hear it on the *Light As A Feather* record. I had never worked with Airto before Return To Forever.

"Steve Gadd was in Return To Forever for six or eight months," Stanley says, "before Lenny White. Mingo Lewis was on percussion. It was a burning group, but Steve didn't want to go on the road. I knew Lenny from our having played with Joe Henderson, so I suggested him for the group. Lenny was a good drummer and group member—a conceptualist. A lot of people don't know that he did the final mix of the *The Romantic Warrior*.

"Lenny was unorthodox," Stanley continues. "He's left-handed, but he sets up like a right-handed drummer. His musical style has an array of things to draw from, because he's listened to lots of rock, jazz, and pop. Lenny turned me onto a lot of stuff I'd never heard. He was the most open of all the musicians I knew at that time. That's something I've always liked about him."

On his first solo album, Stanley picked Tony Williams for the drum seat. "I was a big fan of Tony when he was with Miles," says Stanley. "But I wanted to hear him in something different than what he had been doing at that time. I really had a lot of fun with Tony. When we were doing the session, Tony kept looking at me. One time I asked him to do this roll around the drums. [*Stanley sweeps his hands from left to right.*] It was the only time I specifically asked him to do something, and he said, 'Oh, you want me to play like Billy Cobham,'" Stanley laughs. "Funny thing was, it really had nothing to do with Billy Cobham. I had all this space between one note and another note, and I needed something to fill it up.

"I really enjoyed working with Tony; he's a very spirited drummer," says Clarke, "I heard him six months ago with his own group, and to me he sounds better now. I always knew that Tony looked at himself as a drummer, but I think he also envisioned himself as being a little more—as a *composer*. It took him all



these years, but he's really writing well now, and I love the compositions."

On his second album, *Journey To Love*, Stanley used Steve Gadd in addition to Lenny White. "On that session," says Stanley, "there were some real charts; it wasn't just like jamming. Even the little funky tunes, like 'Silly Putty,' were thought out. The great thing about Steve is that he can read a chart and make it sound like he's *not* reading a chart. He's probably one of the tastiest drummers I've ever played with."

When Stanley writes a chart out, how much of a sketch does he give drummers? "It varies," he replies. "With drummers like Steve, I just give them the basic hits and my notation for rolls. I just write 'roll' or 'fill'—just enough information to do the job. I've never really been one to get into writing out the exact cymbal part unless I'm writing for an orchestral player. I have written parts on all the movie scores I've done. I used an orchestra for the film *Boyz 'N The Hood*. I used Gerry Brown for that. Very few people know that Gerry is an orchestral percussion player and a great timpanist. The stuff that I write out for him is very traditional. That's really the only time I get into serious notation."

On *School Days*, Stanley's third solo album, the drummers were Gerry Brown, Steve Gadd, and Billy Cobham. "Gerry is very underrated," says Stanley. "I've known him all my life; I grew up with him. Yet, I don't even know what the hell he thinks about the

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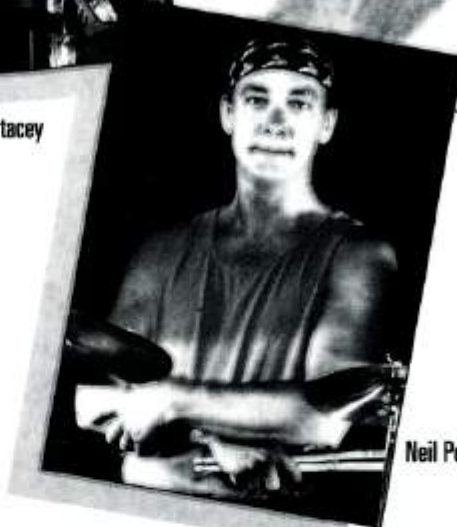
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drums." Stanley laughs, then turns serious. "Gerry is very respected. He's never been considered the *hot* drummer, but Gerry is a very *copied* drummer."

Stanley worked with ex-Rufus drummer John "J.R." Robinson on the first two Stanley Clarke-George Duke Project recordings. "John Robinson has a great studio thing and a great sound on drums. When he plays the beat, boy, you *know* where the beat is. I've never heard a guy play with a click track like John Robinson. It's serious—you don't even *hear* the click. I also liked playing with him because he had a big sound; he really hit the drums hard. I have to admit that I do like drummers who hit really hard."

Stanley has worked with two extraordinary double-bass players: Simon Phillips (on *Rocks, Pebbles And Sand*) and Billy Cobham. What was it like? "I loved playing with Simon," he replies. "Simon was kind of a young Billy, actually. Billy was the most powerful drummer I've ever played with. I've never, ever heard a drummer with so much power. You could stand next to the drums and it would actually feel like the ground was shaking. The guy was in *shape*—and he's *still* in shape."

Thinking back to *School Days*, Stanley recalls how particular Billy was about his sound and approach. "When Billy hit the drums, it didn't just sound like he was banging the things; something very powerful was coming out of the drums. He'd always hit

each drum in a great place, and a get a great sound. I've played with a lot of drummers—I won't mention any names—who just don't hit the drums in the right place. They hit the toms on the side, and don't really get the fullness out of the drums.

"I had Billy on this big, long piece called 'Life Is Just A Game,'" Stanley continues. "He came in with this big Moog synthesizer with patch cords. It was a massive setup, and man, I had a lot of fun. Billy was the right guy for the job. There really was no other drummer at that particular time who could play that song the way I wanted it played. So I was very happy, and I felt honored that he was able to do it."

Stanley later toured with Rayford Griffin and used him on several records. "Rayford is a phenomenal drummer. I used to kid him and tell him he was born in the wrong time. He should have been born ten years earlier. He's a great fusion drummer, but there are no fusion groups around these days. It's frustrating for him. He's a great, great drummer. I have never met a guy that was as consistent with drum solos as Rayford."

How does Stanley feel about drum solos in general? "I like drum solos when they're played by true soloists," he replies. "For instance, Gerry Brown is a true soloist who approaches his solos from a compositional point of view—very musical. Rayford Griffin and Vinnie Colaiuta are like that. Buddy Rich was like that, and Tony Williams is another one. When Billy Cobham played with



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the Mahavishnu Orchestra, he was just brutal with drum solos. But when someone takes a drum solo that's just 'drums playing alone,' it's like a guy playing a trumpet alone. There's nothing there."

We also asked Stanley if he agreed with Lenny White that some drummers play from the top down and others from the bottom up. "In terms of support," he says, "pop rhythm playing is not as adventurous as jazz or fusion. You definitely want to be there with a drummer who thinks from the bottom up, as opposed to the top down. Certain drummers do it better than others. It's rare when you come across a drummer who can be really adventurous but who still thinks from the bottom up. Dennis Chambers is like that. He thinks from the bottom up, but he has just as much facility as Vinnie Colaiuta or Billy Cobham. Dennis is really solid. He can play with the most adventurous musicians, but at the same time can get in there with the funkier cats in the world and be totally natural."

Stanley Clarke's newest group, Animal Logic, has recorded two pop records, with Stewart Copeland on drums and Deborah Holland on vocals. "For some reason, Stewart reminds me of Lenny White," says Stanley. "Maybe it's because he's a strong composer. I've known Stewart for a long time. He used to be the

tour manager for Joan Armatrading, and she did some gigs with Return To Forever. Stewart used to want to borrow Lenny's drums and practice during our sound checks. We didn't know if he could really play. We just thought he was some crazy tour manager!"

On Stanley's next project, which he's currently writing, the drum roster is still somewhat open. "So far," he says, "Dennis Chambers is playing, and Gerry Brown will probably do various percussion things. I'm going to use a lot of percussion players this time, on some music that's borderline African, Latin, Afro-Cuban—whatever they want to call it. It will be both instrumental and vocal, but with more playing, more solos."

In closing, we asked Stanley to describe his dream drummer. He responded, "I would love a guy who views the drums the way Dennis Chambers does—from the bottom up—but also has all of his facility. A guy who can take drum solos like Gerry Brown, play with the force of Billy Cobham, be as adventurous as Vinnie Colaiuta, and have the knowledge of Lenny White."

"That's a hell of a drummer there," Stanley says, laughing. "He'd be 10' 6", with *big* hands...."



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Blas Elias: "Up All Night"

■ Transcribed by Howard Fields

This month *Rock Charts* looks at last month's cover artist, Blas Elias, and his playing on "Up All Night" (from Slaughter's *Stick It To Ya* release). Here you'll find some solid groove work from Blas, plus a few nice hi-hat licks and some quick doubles on the bass drum. It's a solid drumming performance by Blas.

MUSIC KEY

Open	O	R.C.	C.C.
H.H.	X		
T.T.			
S.D.			
F.T.			
B.D.			
H.H.	X		
without			

$J = 104$

This section contains the first ten measures of the drum solo. It features a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, often marked with 'x' to indicate specific drum sounds. The notation is spread across five staves. Measure 10 ends with the instruction "To Coda" followed by a Coda symbol (a circle with a cross inside).

To Coda ⊕

This section contains measures 11 and 12 of the drum solo. It continues the rhythmic complexity with various drum sounds indicated by 'x' marks. Measure 12 ends with the instruction "D.S. al Coda" followed by a Coda symbol.

D.S. al Coda ⊕

This section contains the final four measures of the drum solo, measures 13 through 16. Measure 13 begins with the instruction "Coda" followed by a Coda symbol. The notation continues with intricate rhythmic patterns and drum sounds. Measure 16 concludes the piece with a final chord of drums.

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MD Festival Moves To Spring 93

In an effort to overcome logistical difficulties and make attendance easier for drummers, *Modern Drummer's* Drum Festival Weekend has been shifted to a spring date in 1993. The past four festivals have been held in early September.

"We've had several problems each year with the September date," says Festival coordinator Rick Van Horn. "One had to do with the venue. We're very happy with Montclair State College; their facilities and location serve our needs exceptionally well. But in order to announce show dates in September, we must have them confirmed by the previous March, and the college is unable to do this because those two months are in different school years. As a result, each year we've been faced with the possibility of losing our dates after we have already announced them and sold tickets.

"Securing the artists we wanted to appear has been another difficulty," Van Horn continues, "because September is at the end of the summer touring season, and many top drummers are on the road. And finally, we've heard from drummers who could not attend in September because school had just started, or because their summer vacations had exhausted their travel budgets."

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date—late March or early April—will eliminate the problems we've experienced, and make attending the Festival easier for our audience at the same time."

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Modern Drummer and Yamaha Corporation are pleased to announce that Steve **Turowski**, of Poughkeepsie, New York, is the winner of Yamaha's Drum Rig Giveaway. Steve will receive a drumset, electronic percussion, a complete sound system, and a DAT machine—a total of \$12,400 worth of equipment—from Yamaha.

Winners of *MD*'s March '91 Trivia Contest are **Stan Ehrenfeld**, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, **Robert Semonchik**, of Colonie, New York, and **Norman Larsen**, of Templeton, California. Each was able to match a list of 13 Pro-Mark drummers with their bands, and each will receive 12 pairs of drumsticks, a *Deluxe Stick Bag*, and a *Deluxe Cymbal Case*, compliments of Pro-Mark.

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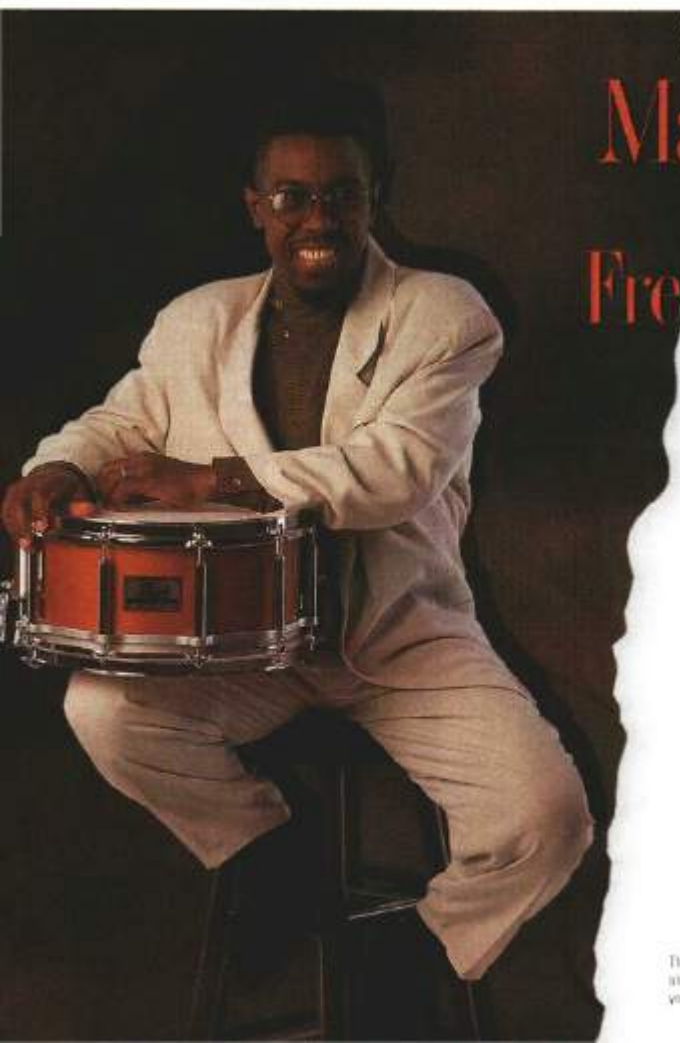
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Coming Events

Top Drum '92, June 7, 1992, Taylor's Music, West Chester, Pennsylvania, 2:00 EM. (Drum contest, all ages. Participants are to send a two-minute cassette including a 30-second groove and a solo. Deadline for tapes is May 15. Admission at the door is \$5.00 plus a can of food, which will be donated to the homeless. Proceeds for the event will benefit the Community Center. For more information, call Greg or Len at [215] 696-1812.)

Austin Aqua Festival, August 6-8, 13-15, and 20-22, 6:30 P.M.-12:30 A.M., Auditorium Shores, Austin, Texas. (Music festival featuring over 50 national, regional, and local bands on three stages. Admission: \$5-10. For more information, call [512] 472-5664.)

Endorser News

Recent additions to Paiste's endorser list include: **Blaine Harris, James Gadsen, Charlie Adams, John Dittrich, Brooks Wackerman, Juan Escovedo, Mingo Lewis, Roger Earl, Dave Palmer,**

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The **Euro-Disney Ail-American Marching Band** is using Yamaha equipment. Yamaha has also added **Michael Varner and Dr. Laurence Kaptain** to its endorser/clinician list.

Pearl Cancels Summer School

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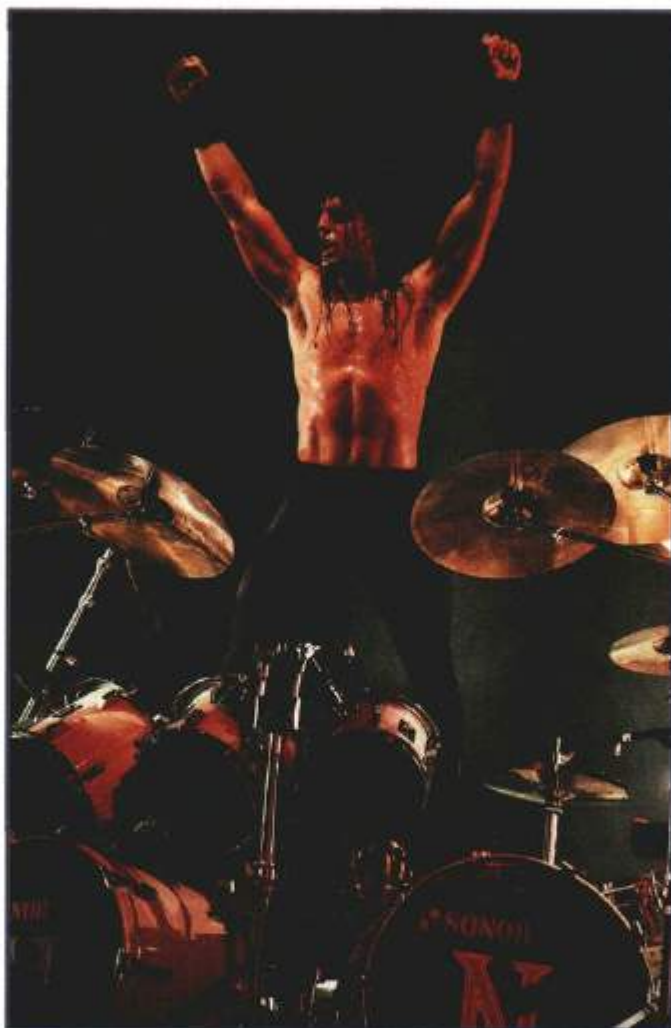
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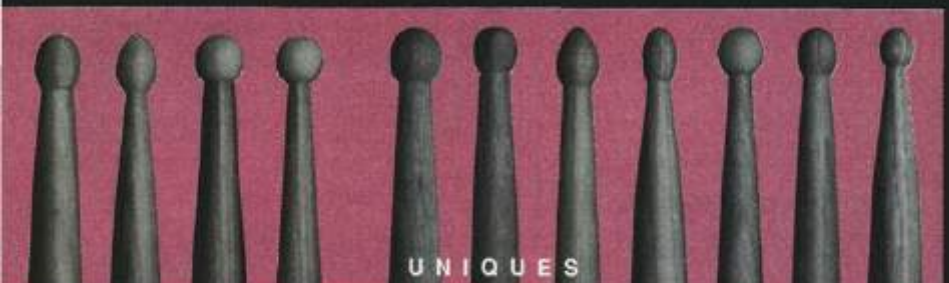
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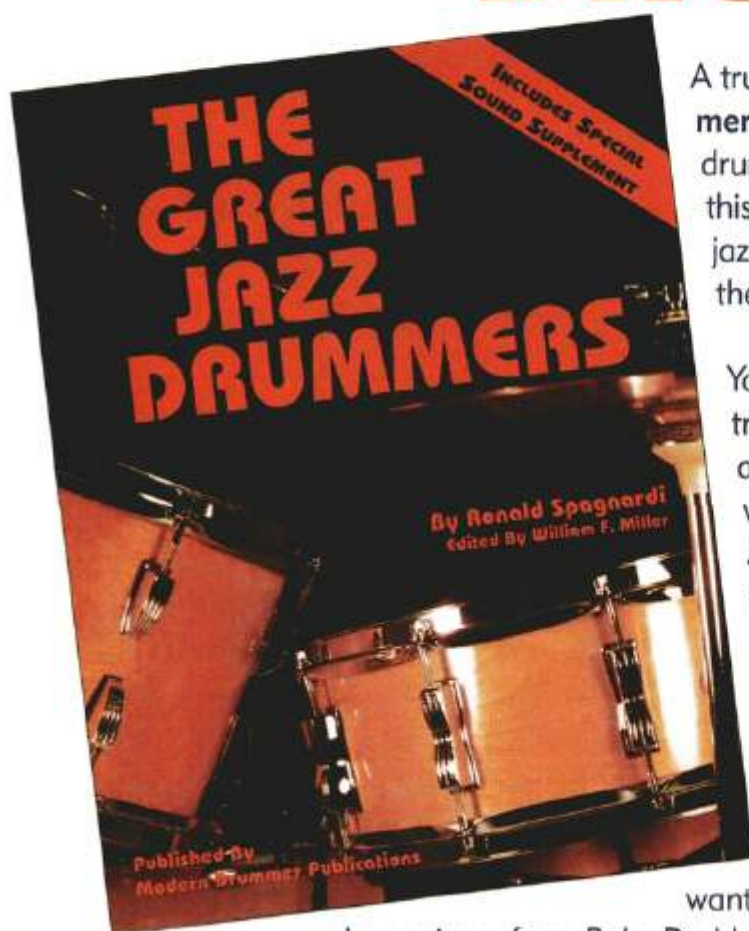
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A 440 Music	88	Geddit? Drumwear, Inc.	89	PureCussion, Inc.	69
ABK Rocks	97	Gene Piccalo Enterprises	134	Remo	59
Alchemy Films	58	Glenn Weber Drum Studio	128	Rhythm Tech	48
Aquarian Accessories	70	Gon Bops	93	RimSHOT Drumsticks	130/131
Atlanta Institute of Music	58	Gorilla Snot	128	Roc-N-Soc	60
Atlanta Pro Percussion	114	Gretsch	Inside Back Cover	Sabian	54/55, 103, 111
Australian Drum Manufacturers (ADM)	133	HQ Percussion Products	42, 82	Sam Ash Music Stores	72
Bison Drum Co.	128	Hands On	132	Sapphire Percussions	125
Blue Note	75, 86	Hot Sticks	60	Shure	14/15
Boom Theory	68	KC Drumworks	116	Simmons	96, 121
Bostac Co./The Toy Box	102	KAT, Inc.	65	Slap Happy Productions	132, 133
Calato/Regal Tip	83	L.T. Lug Lock	126	Sonor	13, 72
Cappella Drumsticks	74	Latin Percussion, Inc.	84	Stik Works	133
Corder Drum Co.	90	Ludwig Industries	113, Inside Front Cover	Stixonics Drumstix	58
DF Enterprises	128, 130	Manny's Music	91	Suncoast Music Distributing	124
DCI Music Video	95	Mapex Percussion	5	Super Gloss/Sam Barnard	132
ddrum	87	Maxell	66/67	Tama	50/51, 115
Discount Distributors	107	MD Back Issues	108	Taw Sound Co.	60
Dopple, Inc.	132	MD Great Jazz Drummers Book	135	Thelonious Monk Inter'l Jazz Competition	123
Drum Doctors	128	MD Library	124	Thoroughbred Music	69
Drum Workshop	82, 94, 134	MD & Premier Trivia Contest	76/77	UDU Drums	128
Drummers Collective	70	MD Subscriptions	129	Unique Percussion	132
Drums on Sale	132	Mechanical Music Corp./Stick Handler	88	Universal Percussion	53
Drumst6	86	Meinl	92	Vater Percussion	116
Drumstix	134	Musicians Institute	61	Vic Firth, Inc.	44/45, 88, 92
Duratech	114	Paiste	17, 49, 73, 109	Waddell's Cymbal Warehouse	133
Easton	98, 99	Parzale	132	Wild Side Studios	133
Evans Products	1, 105	Pearl Corporation	18/19, 71, 122, 127	Yamaha	43, 107, 117, 125
Falcon Design	132	Play It Straight	126	Zildjian	10/11, 79, Outside Back Cover
Firchie Drum Co.	85	Precision Drum Co.	132		
Fork's Drum Closet	128	Premier	7, 38/39		
Form Leaders Co., Inc.	133	Pro*Mark	57, 84, 127		

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